

THE HISTORIC CITY OF DELHI

Down its 1000-year-old recorded history, Delhi was razed and built several times. The city played host to many rulers like the Chauhans, the Slave kings, the Khiljis, the Tughluqs, the Mughals and the British. It suffered the brutalities of numerous invaders. Each ruler and each invader left his own special mark on the psyche of this great city. The historic city of Delhi presents a palette of colourful influences that truly reflects the composite culture of India.

OTHER ACK BRAVEHEARTS:

SHAH JAHAN



SULTANA RAZIA



AKBAR



ASHOKA



ALSO LOOK FOR:

MAHABHARATA



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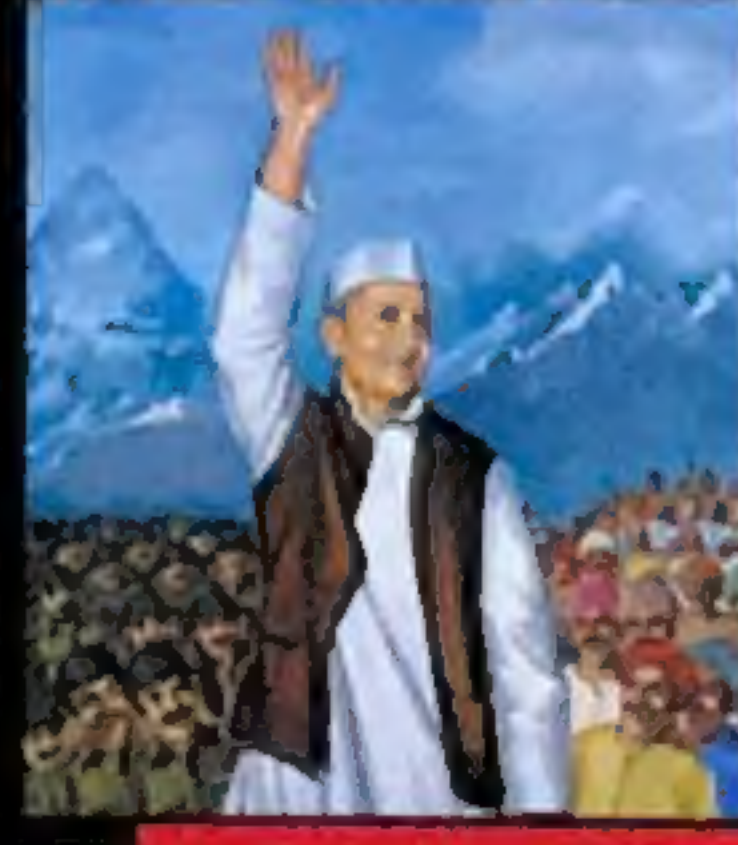
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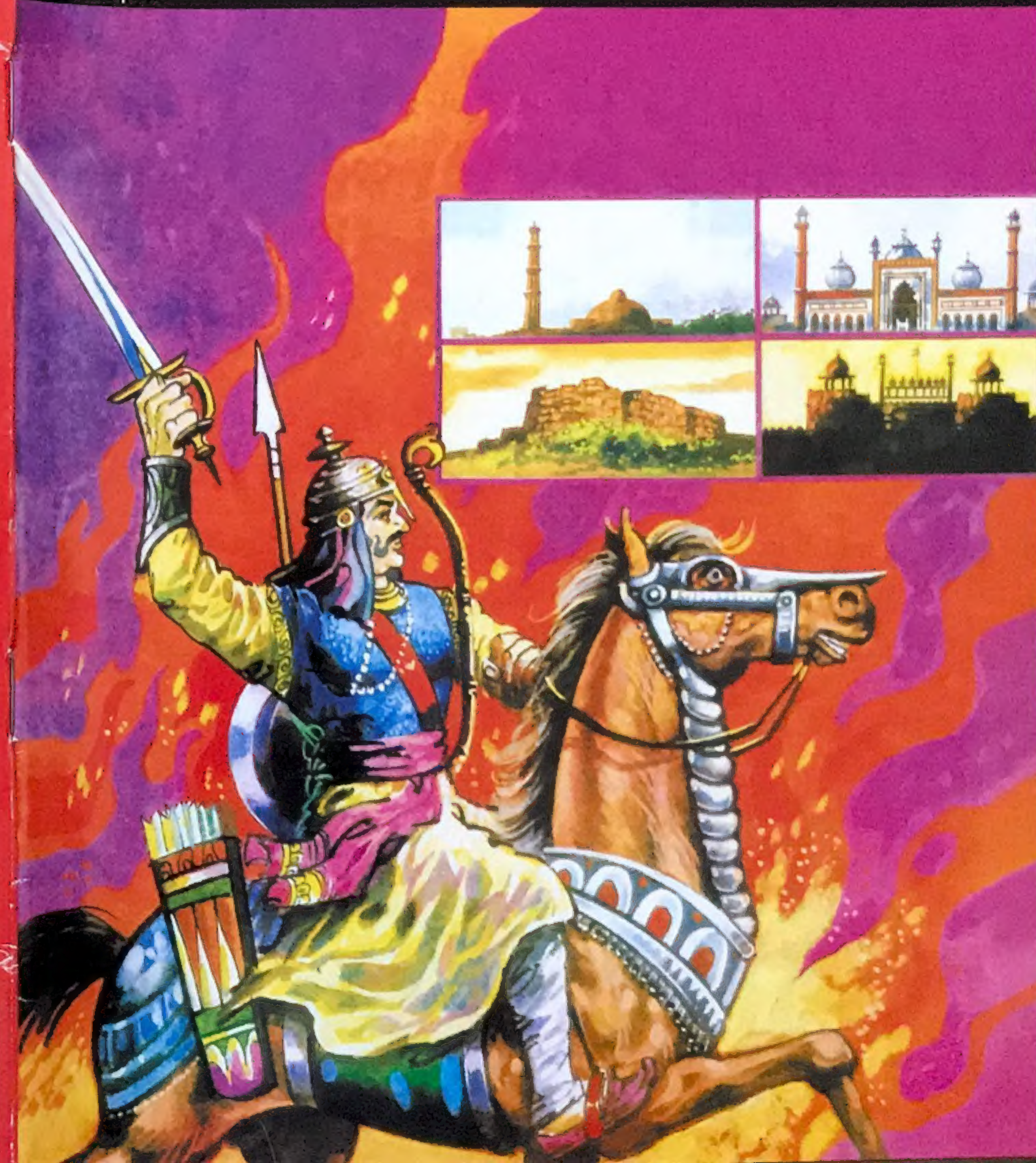
BRAVEHEARTS



THE HISTORIC CITY OF DELHI

A TALE OF POWER AND PASSION

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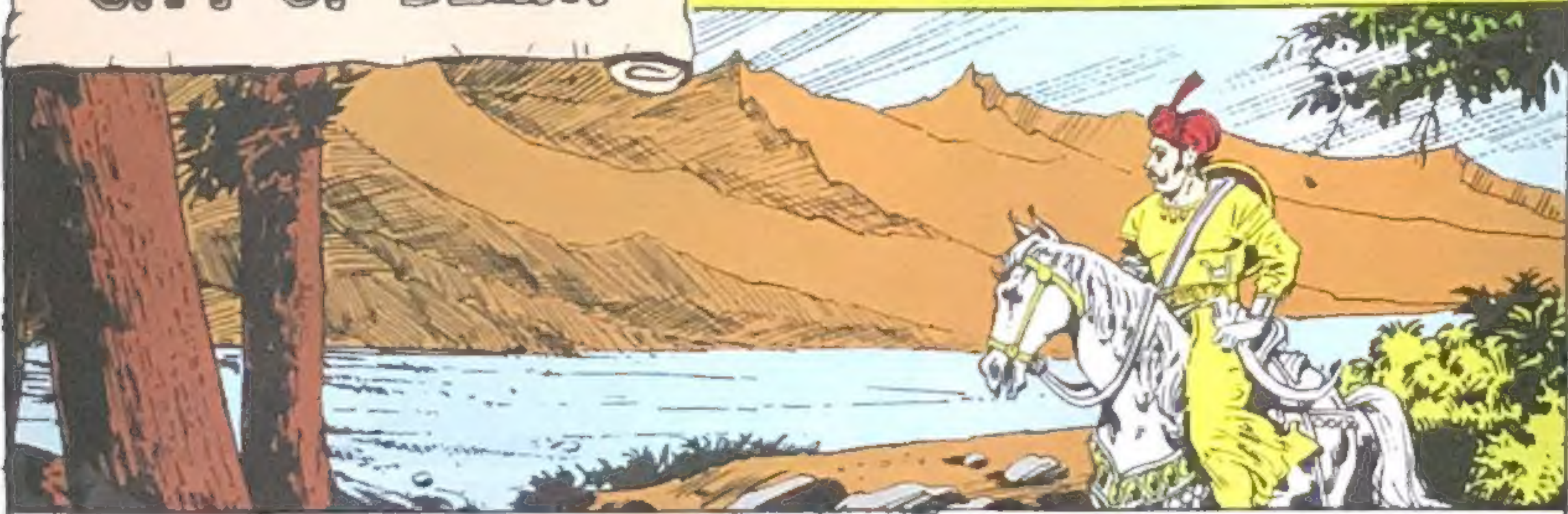
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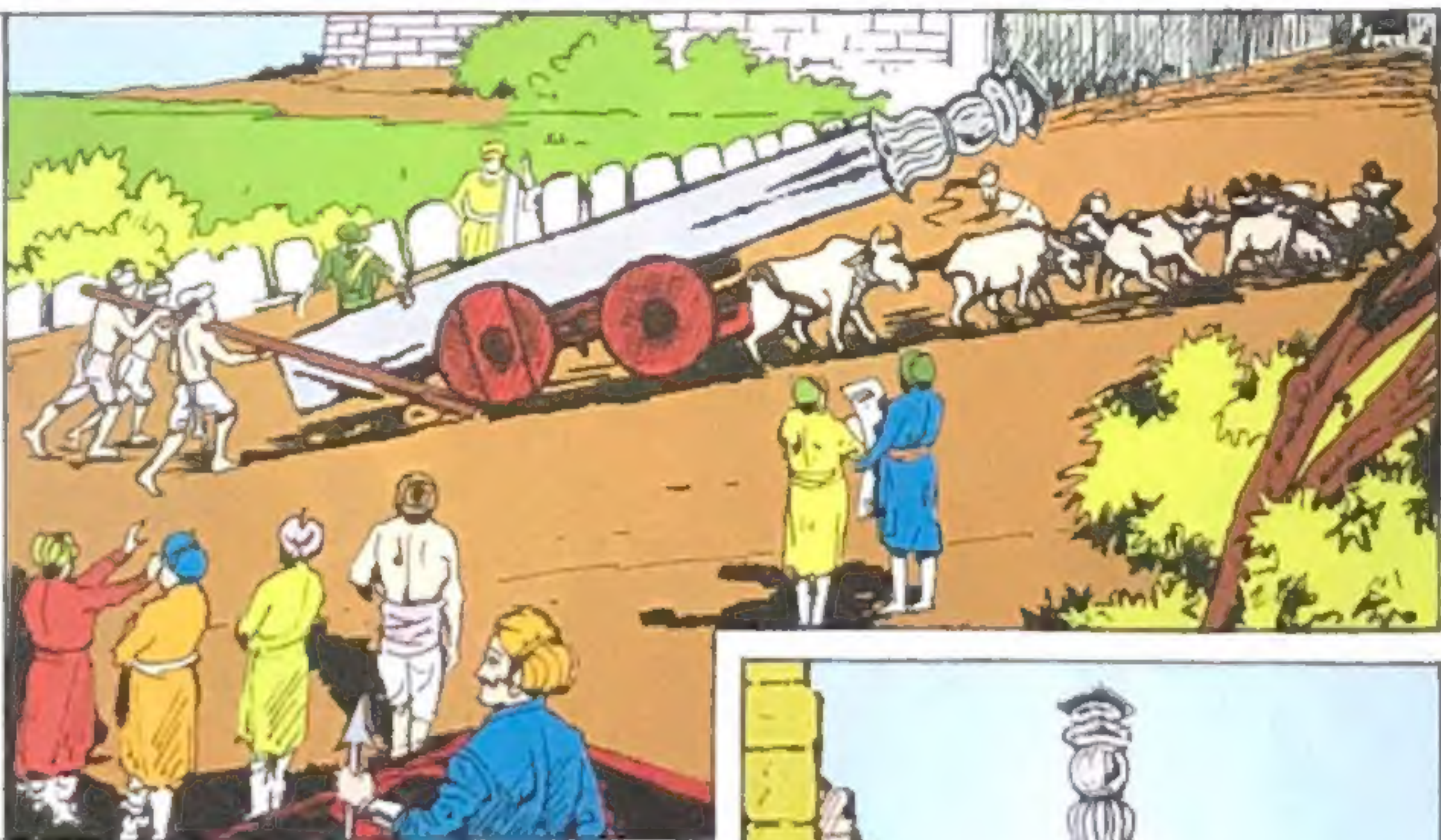
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THE HISTORIC CITY OF DELHI

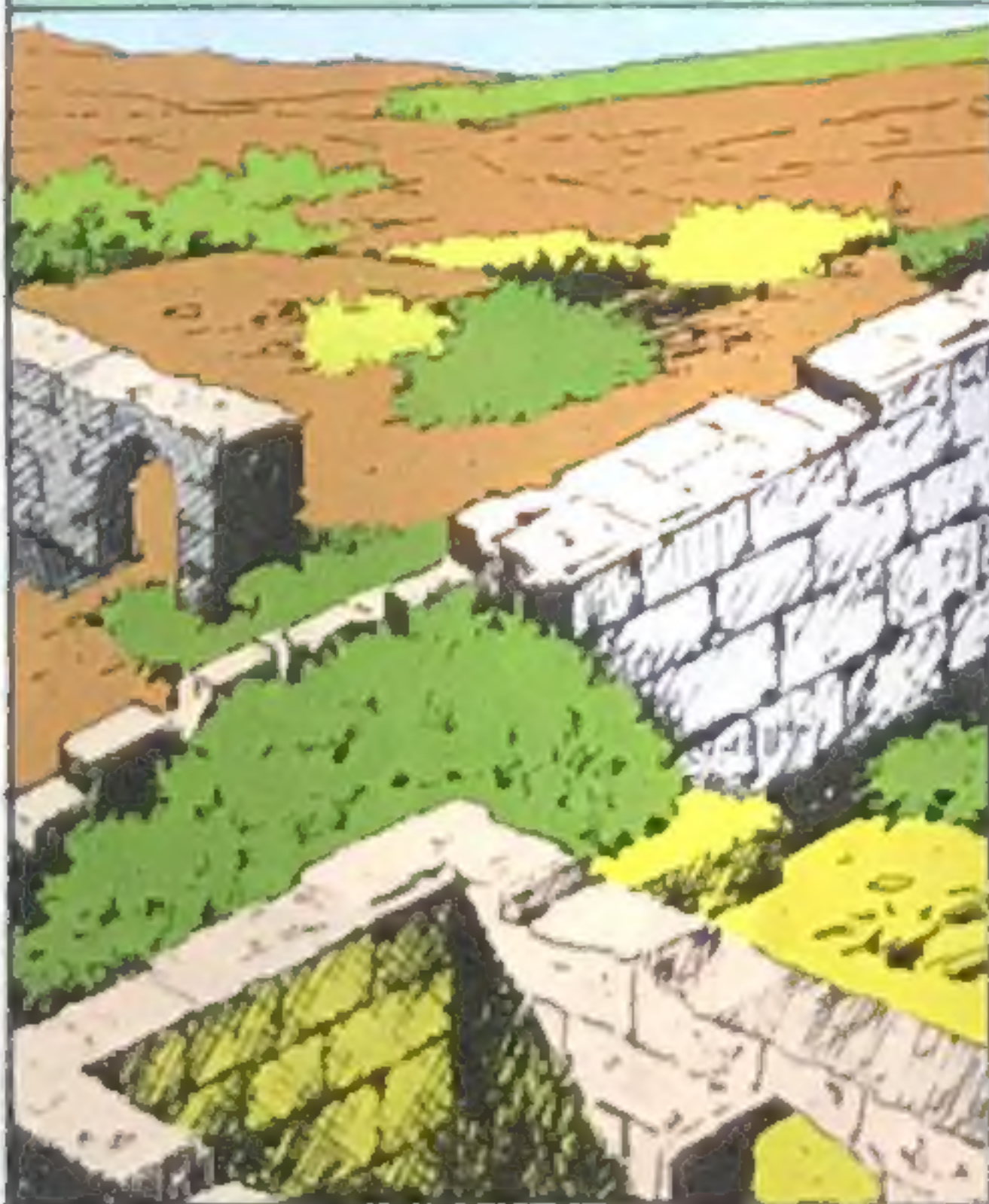
IN 732, THE TUNWARS, A RAJPUT CLAN, MADE DELHI THE CAPITAL OF THEIR KINGDOM. AROUND 1000, THE TUNWARS WERE FACED WITH THE THREAT OF A MUSLIM INVASION FROM THE NORTH-WEST...



...AND THEIR KING, ANANGPAL II, IS SAID TO HAVE BUILT THE CITADEL CALLED THE LALKOT AND TO HAVE PLACED THE IRON PILLAR WITHIN IT. THE PILLAR, REGARDED AS THE STANDARD OF LORD VISHNU, WAS BROUGHT FROM A TEMPLE.



NOTHING MUCH REMAINS OF LALKOT...



... BUT THE IRON PILLAR IS STILL INTACT — A TRIBUTE TO THE METALLURGICAL SKILLS OF ANCIENT INDIANS. THE PILLAR SHOWS NO TRACE OF RUST IN SPITE OF EXPOSURE TO SUN AND RAIN FOR CENTURIES. IT IS NOW AT LEAST 1,600 YEARS OLD.

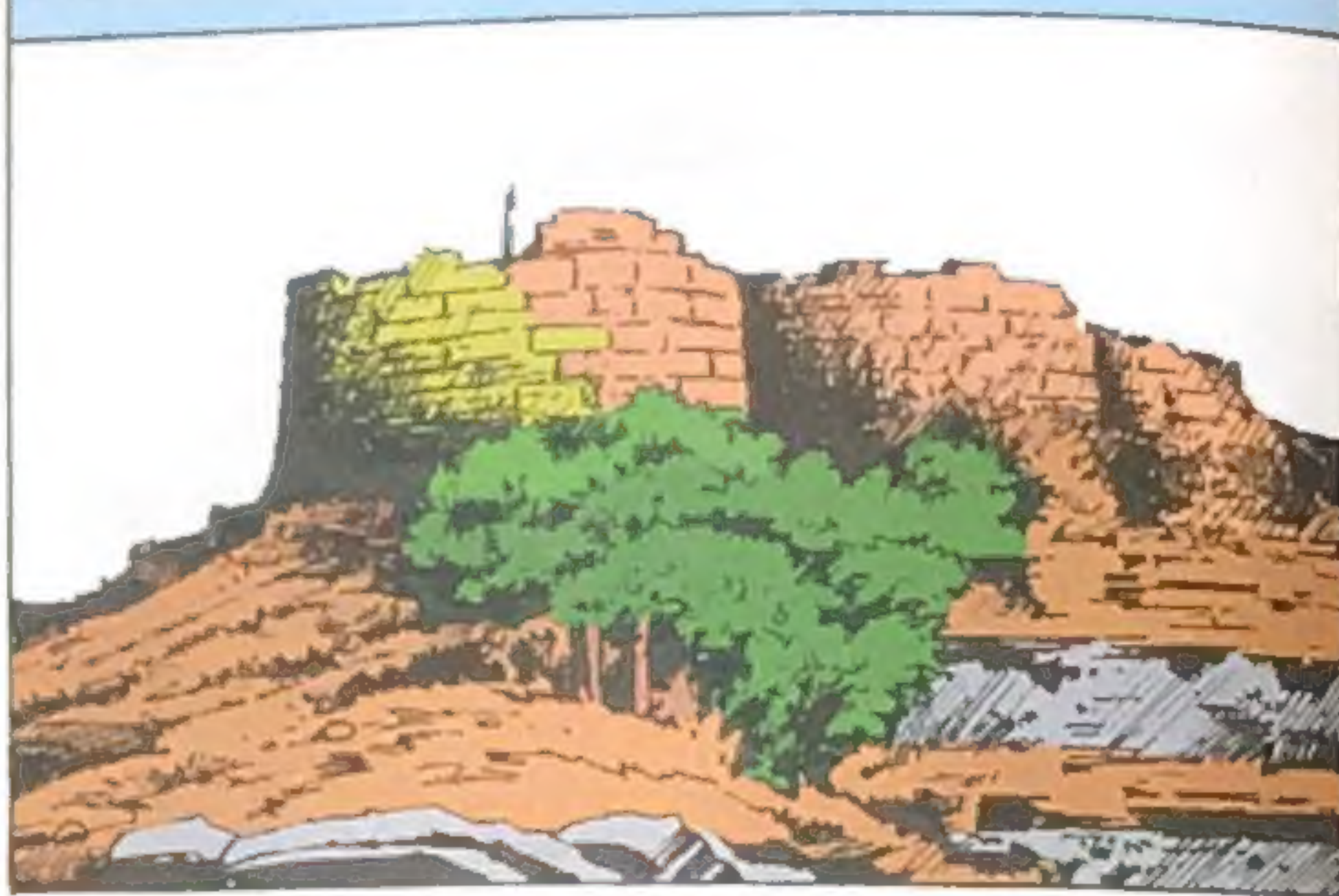


THE TUNWARS WERE OVERTHROWN BY THE CHAUHANS, ANOTHER RAJPUT CLAN.



THE GREATEST RULER OF THIS DYNASTY WAS PRITHVIRAJ III.

PRITHVIRAJ STRENGTHENED THE FORT OF LALKOT AND RENAMED IT RAI PITHORA.



IN 1191, MUHAMMAD OF GHOR INVADED INDIA.



PRITHVIRAJ FOUGHT THE INVADER AND DEFEATED HIM IN BATTLE...

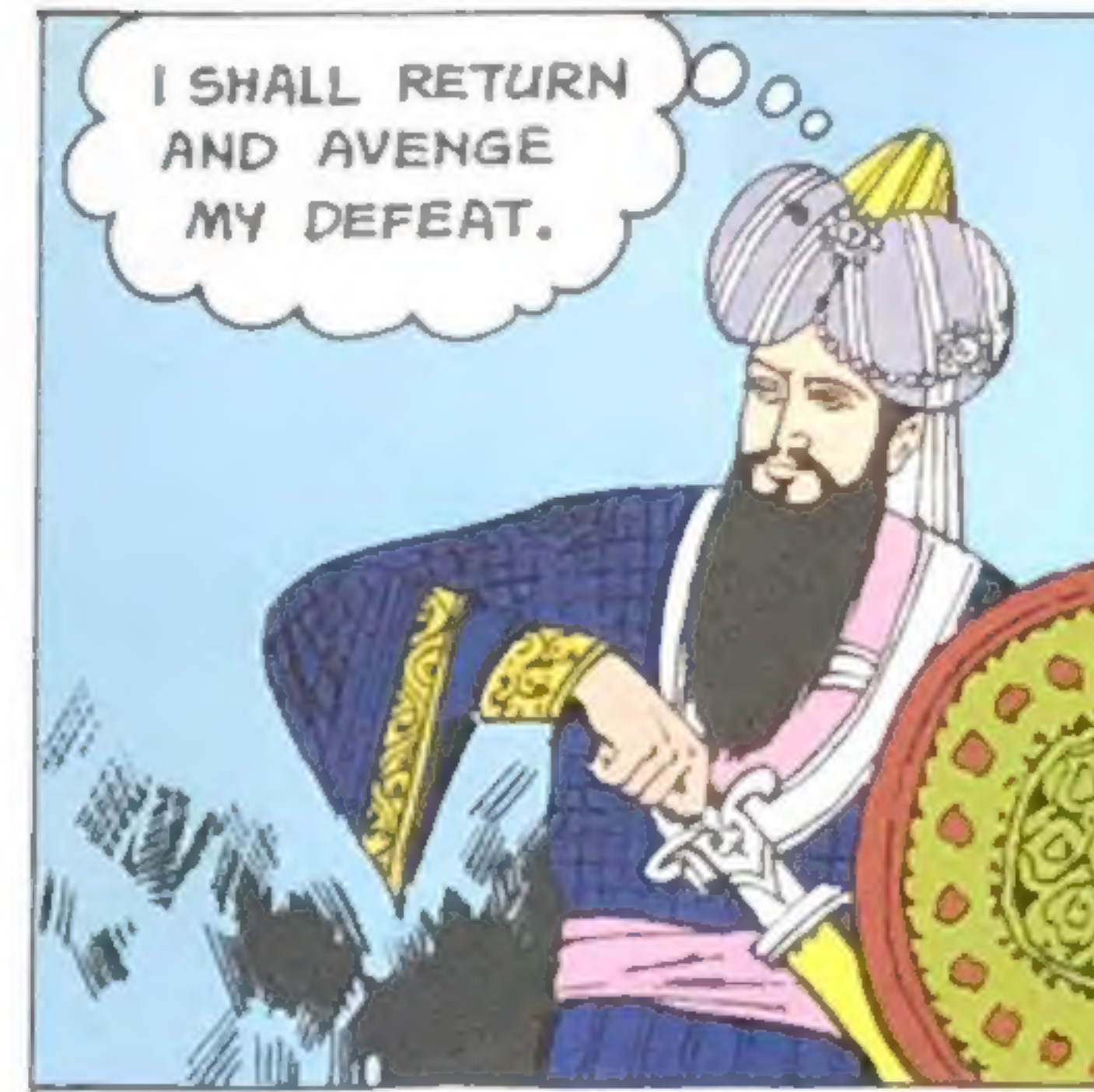


...BUT SPARED HIS LIFE.

SEND HIM BACK TO HIS COUNTRY!



I SHALL RETURN AND AVENGE MY DEFEAT.



MUHAMMAD RETURNED THE FOLLOWING YEAR. THE TWO ADVERSARIES MET AGAIN. BUT THIS TIME IT WAS PRITHVIRAJ WHO WAS DEFEATED.



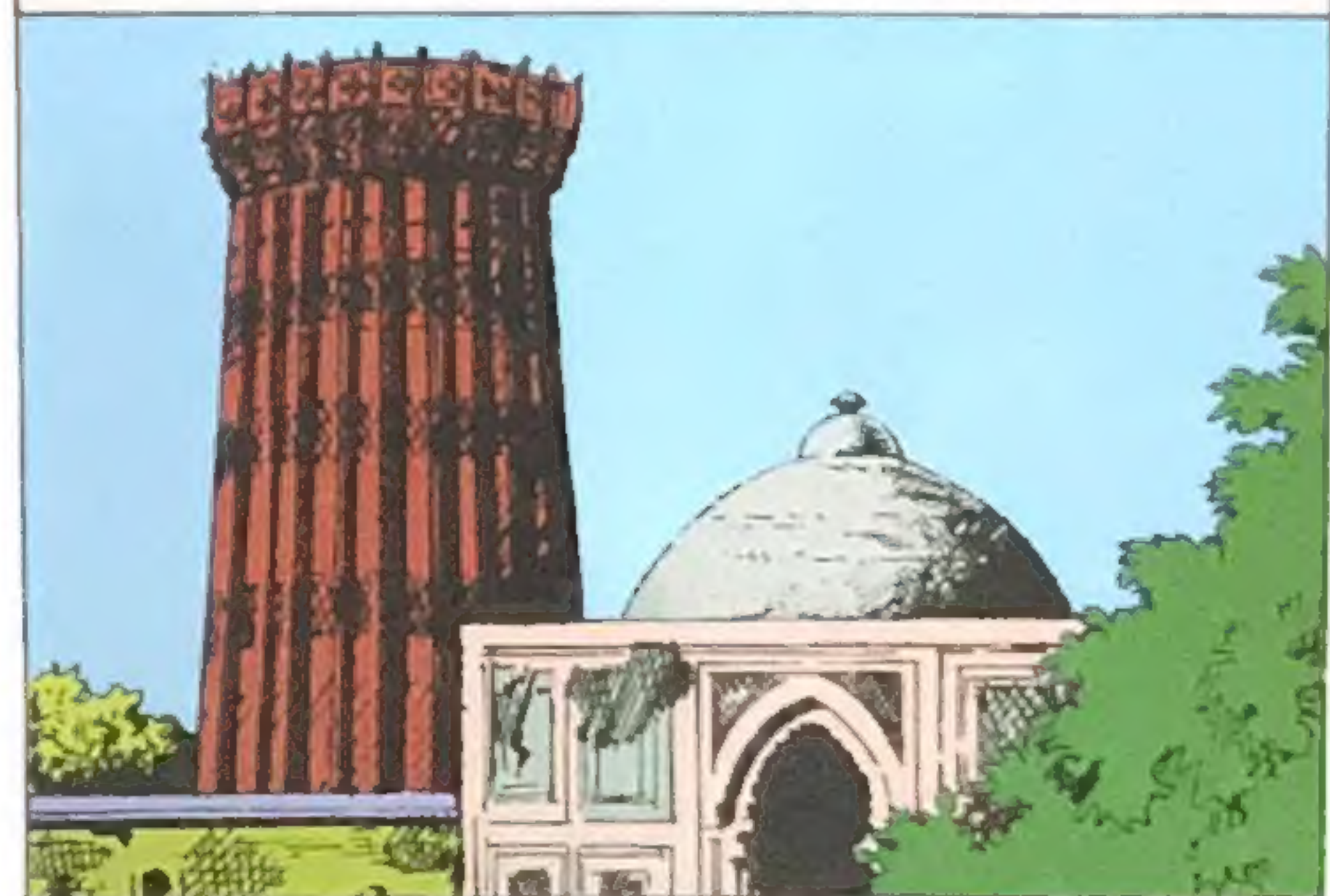
AND THE GALLANT RAJPUT WAS PUT TO DEATH.

DELHI PASSED INTO THE HANDS OF QUTB-UD-DIN AIBAK, ONE OF MUHAMMAD'S GENERALS.

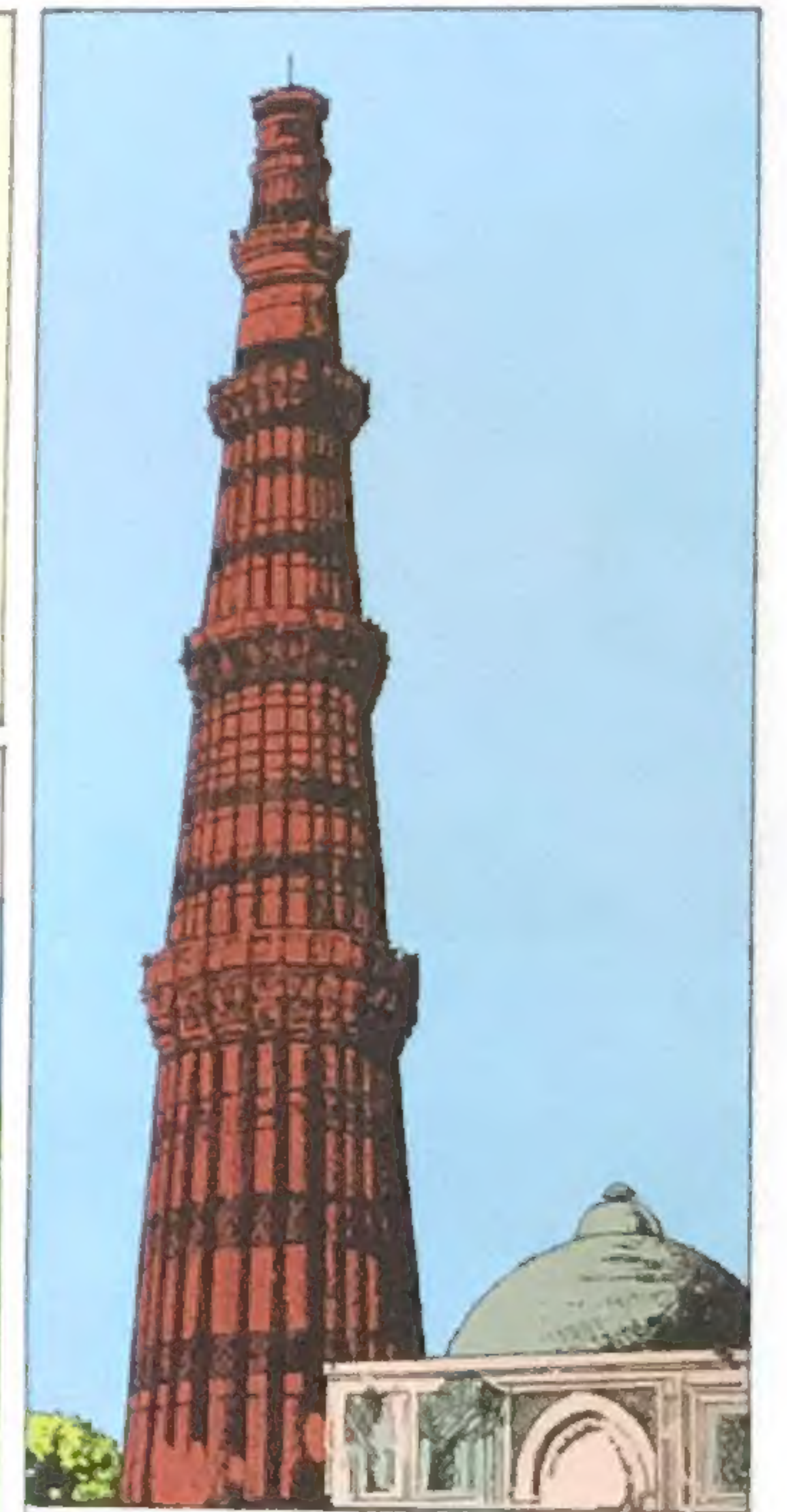


QUTB-UD-DIN HAD STARTED LIFE AS A SLAVE AND THE DYNASTY HE FOUNDED CAME TO BE KNOWN AS THE SLAVE DYNASTY.

SOME YEARS LATER THE CONQUEROR BEGAN TO BUILD THE QUTB MINAR, PROBABLY TO COMMEMORATE HIS VICTORIES IN INDIA.



BUT HE DID NOT LIVE TO SEE IT FINISHED.



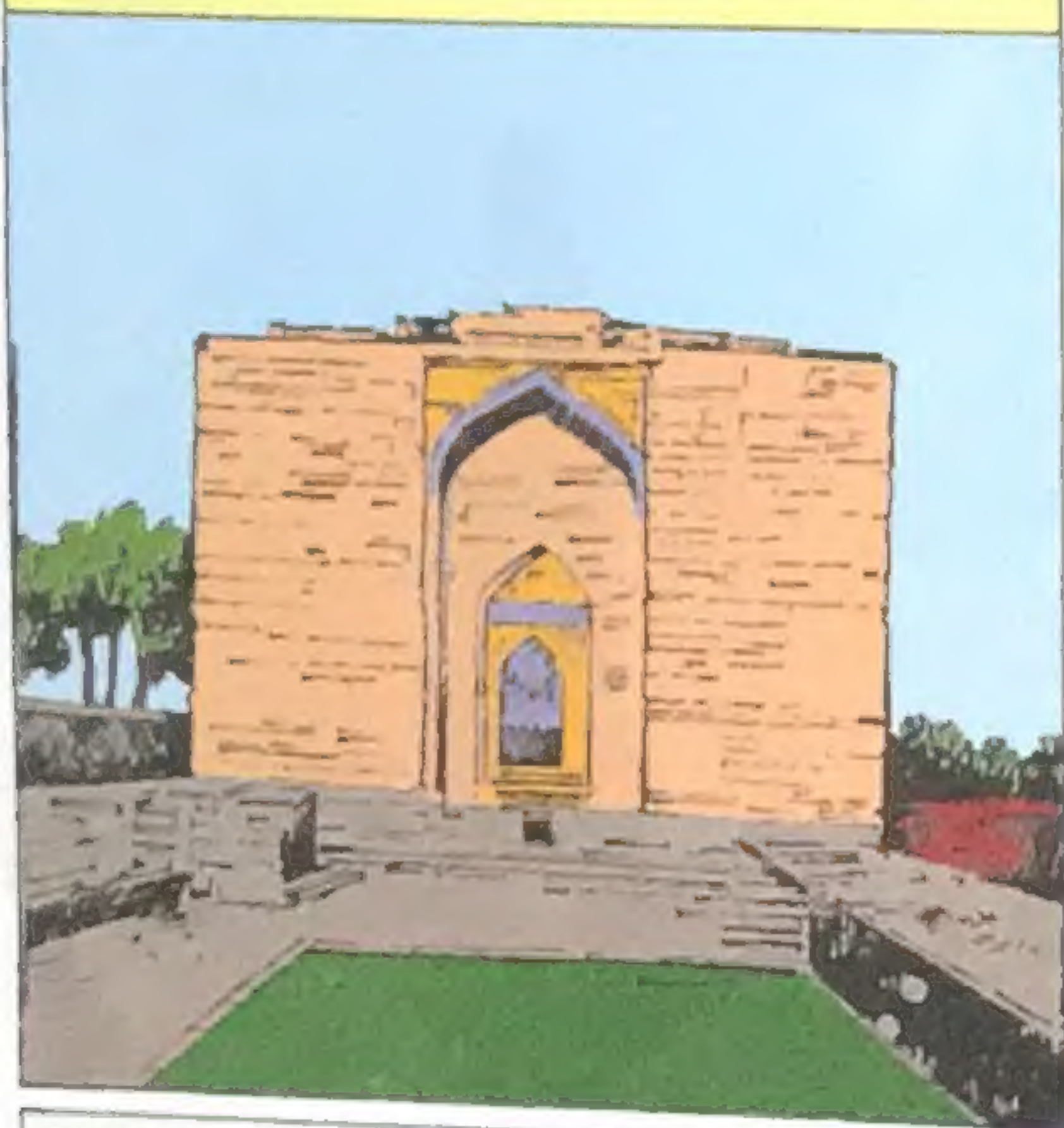
IT WAS HIS SON-IN-LAW AND SUCCESSOR, ILTUTMISH, WHO COMPLETED THE STRUCTURE. THE FIVE-STOURED MINAR IS 72.56 METRES IN HEIGHT.

NEAR THE MINAR,
STAND THE RUINS
OF THE FIRST
MOSQUE OF THE
NORTH—THE
QIWWAT-UL-ISLAM
OR THE MIGHT OF
ISLAM, BUILT BY
QUTB-UD-DIN...



...AND ENLARGED
BY ILTUTMISH.
ILTUTMISH HAD
A GLORIOUS
REIGN AND HE
CONSOLIDATED
MUSLIM POWER
IN INDIA.

HIS TOMB STANDS ADJACENT TO THE
MOSQUE. IT IS SIMPLE ON THE OUTSIDE...



...BUT HAS PROFUSE CARVINGS AND
INSCRIPTIONS INSIDE. THERE ARE
SEVERAL HINDU MOTIFS AMONG THE
CARVINGS, AND BECAUSE OF THIS THE
TOMB HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS "ONE
OF THE RICHEST EXAMPLES OF HINDU
ART APPLIED TO MUHAMMADAN PURPOSES."



ILTUTMISH'S CHILDREN FOUGHT FOR
THE THRONE. ONE BROTHER
MURDERED THE OTHER.



FINALLY HIS DAUGHTER, SULTANA RAZIA, SAT ON THE
THRONE. BUT SHE COULD NOT HOLD HER OWN IN
THE MALE-DOMINATED SOCIETY OF HER TIMES AND
LOST HER LIFE IN A BATTLE THREE YEARS LATER.



THIS IS HOW A CHRONICLER OF
THE TIMES DESCRIBES SULTANA
RAZIA:

SHE WAS WISE, JUST
AND GENEROUS; A
BENEFACTOR OF HER
KINGDOM AND DISPENSER
OF JUSTICE; THE PROTECTOR
OF HER SUBJECTS AND A
LEADER OF HER ARMIES...
BUT SHE WAS NOT BORN
OF THE RIGHT SEX. AND
SO, IN THE ESTIMATION OF
MEN, ALL THESE VIRTUES
WERE WORTHLESS. MAY
GOD HAVE MERCY
ON HER.

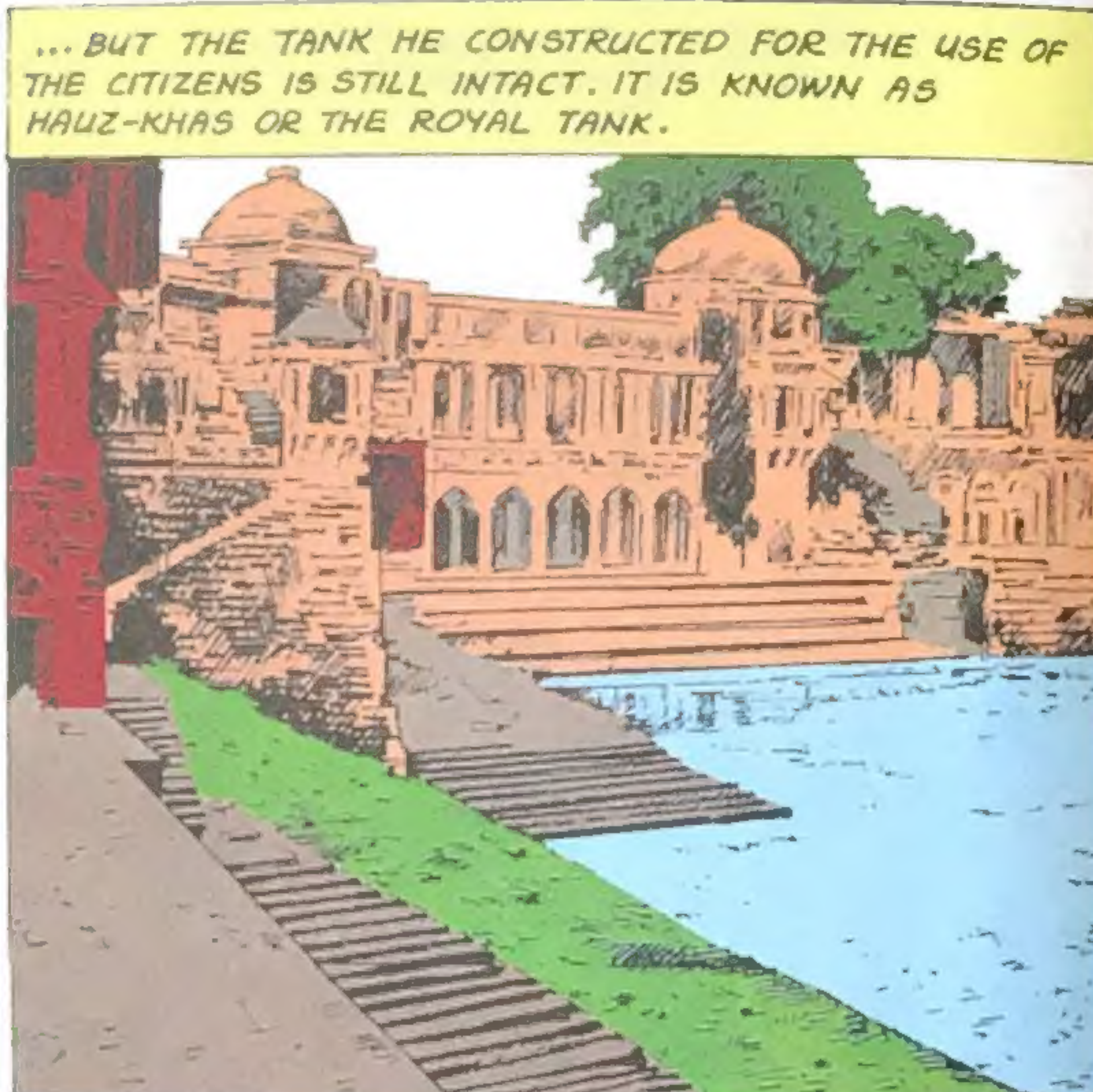
THE SLAVE DYNASTY IN COURSE OF TIME
GAVE PLACE TO THE DYNASTY. THE
GREATEST KING OF THIS PATHAN DYNASTY
WAS ALA-UD-DIN WHO MADE HIMSELF
MASTER OF A LARGE PART OF INDIA AND
PROVED HIS MILITARY PROWESS TO THE
WHOLE WORLD BY DEFEATING THE
FEROCIOUS MONGOL INVADERS.



HIS COINS DESCRIBE HIM AS
AL SIKUNDER AL SAQUEE,
THE SECOND ALEXANDER.

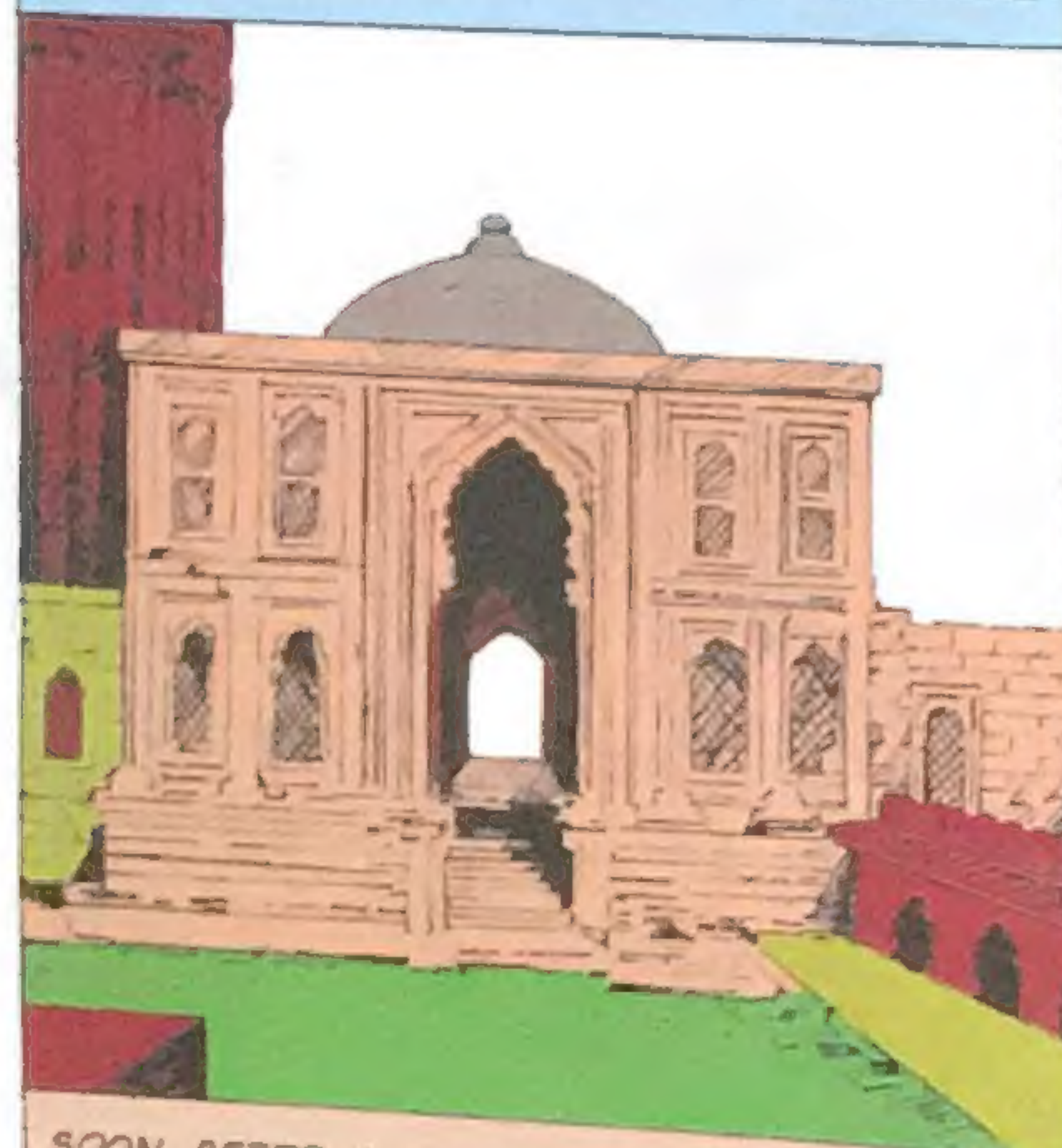


THE 'SECOND ALEXANDER' LOVED TO BUILD AND HE HAD GOOD TASTE TOO. NOTHING MUCH REMAINS OF SIRI, THE CITY HE FOUNDED...



... BUT THE TANK HE CONSTRUCTED FOR THE USE OF THE CITIZENS IS STILL INTACT. IT IS KNOWN AS HAUZ-KHAS OR THE ROYAL TANK.

HE ALSO BUILT THE ALAI DARWAZA NEAR THE QUTB MINAR. THE ALAI DARWAZA HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS 'ONE OF THE MOST TREASURED GEMS OF ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE'.



SOON AFTER ALA-UD-DIN, THE KHILJI DYNASTY CAME TO AN END IN AN ORGY OF VIOLENCE. THE CITY AND THE EMPIRE PASSED INTO THE HANDS OF THE TUGHLUQS.

GHIYAS-UD-DIN TUGHLUQ, THE FOUNDER OF THE NEW DYNASTY, WAS AFRAID THAT THE MONGOLS WOULD ATTACK DELHI.



WE MUST BE PREPARED FOR THEM. I SHALL BUILD A FORTIFIED CITY HERE.



IT SHALL BE KNOWN AS TUGHLUQABAD.



ONE DAY —

HEY, YOU! WHOM ARE YOU WORKING FOR?

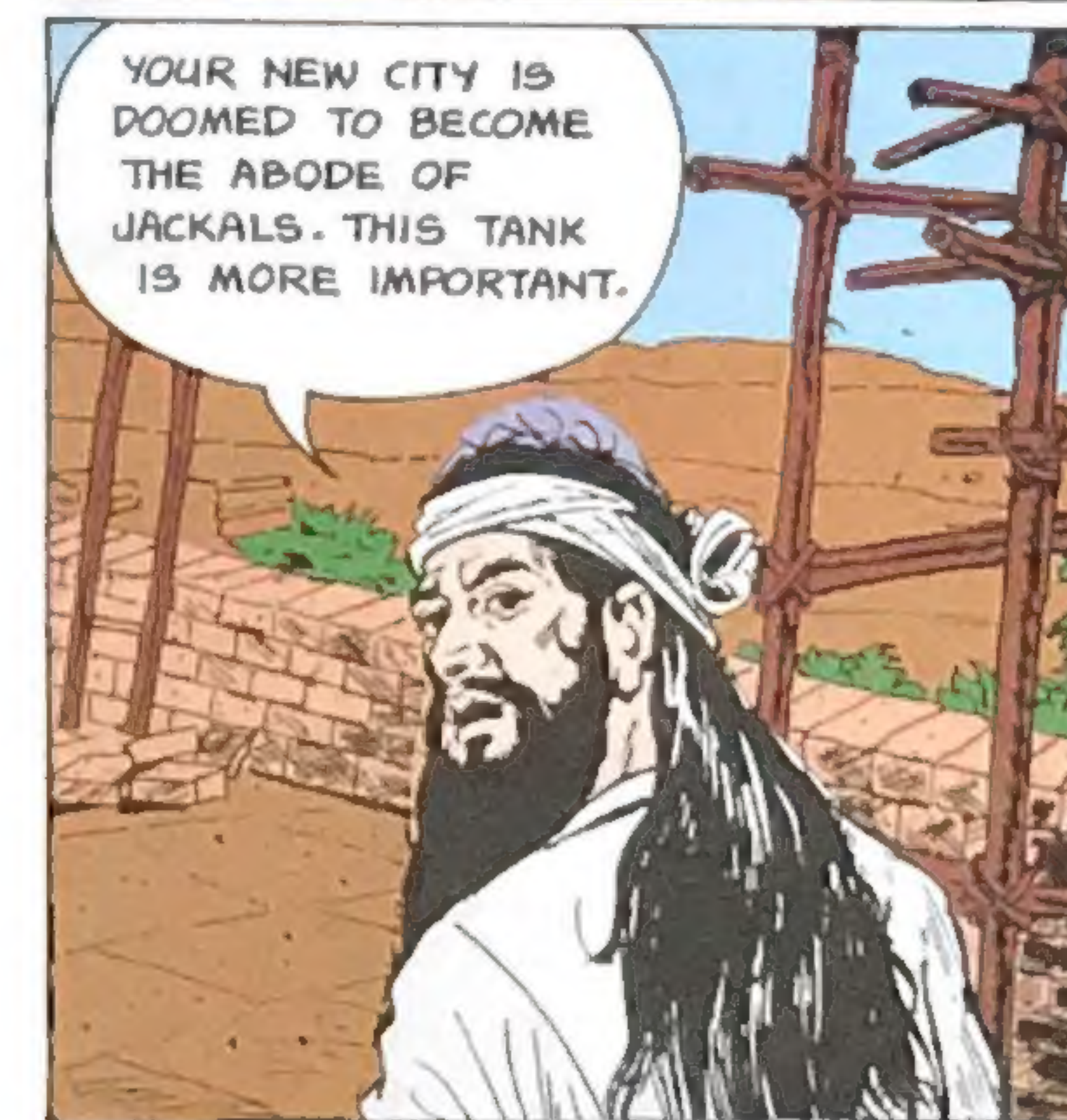
THEY ARE WORKING FOR ME.

THE MAN WHO SPOKE WAS NIZAM-UD-DIN AULIYA, A SUFI SAINT.



WE ARE BUILDING A TANK FOR THE PEOPLE.

THE KING NEEDS THESE MEN TO WORK ON THE NEW CITY.



YOUR NEW CITY IS DOOMED TO BECOME THE ABODE OF JACKALS. THIS TANK IS MORE IMPORTANT.

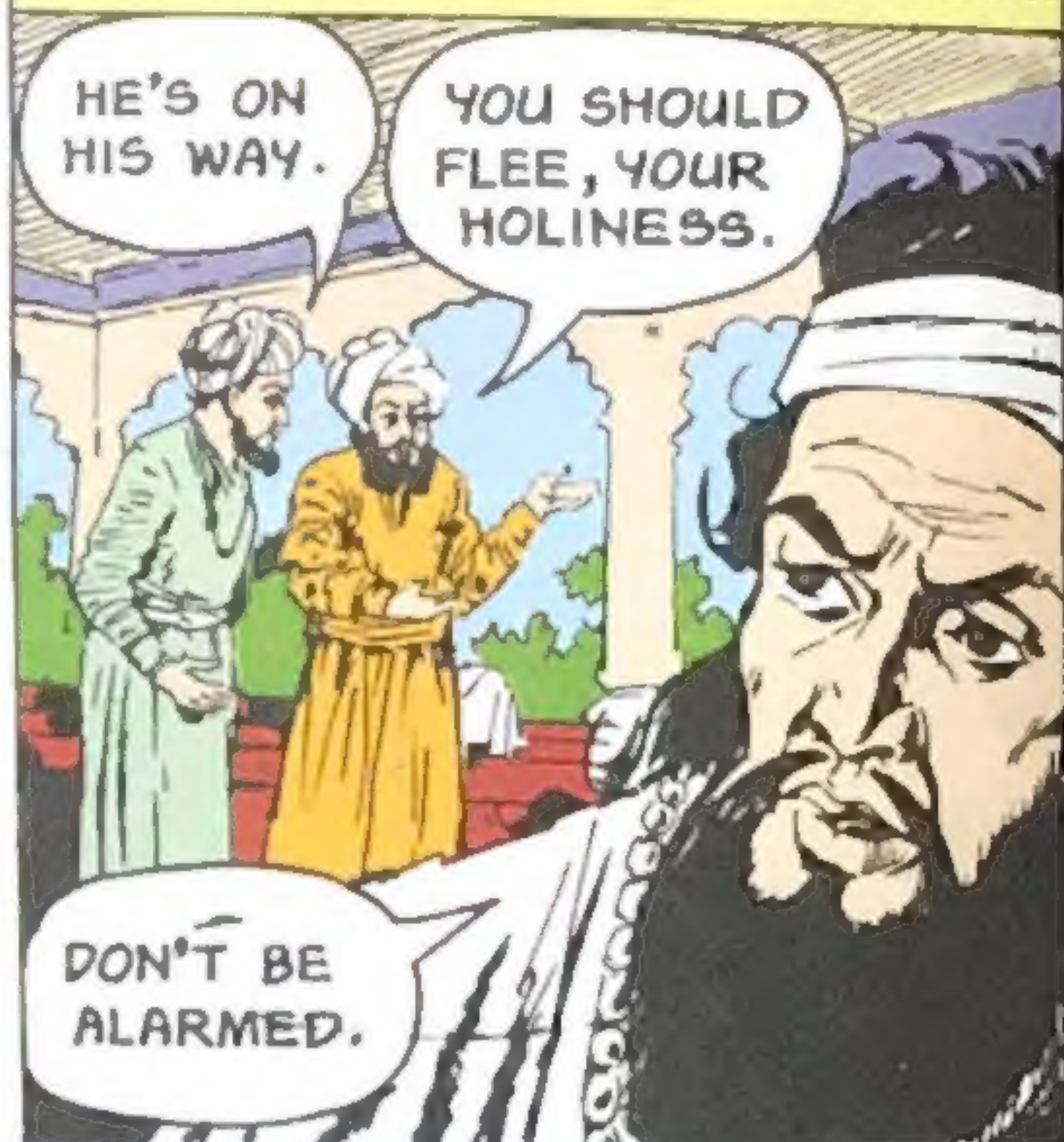


THE SULTAN WILL NOT BE PLEASED.

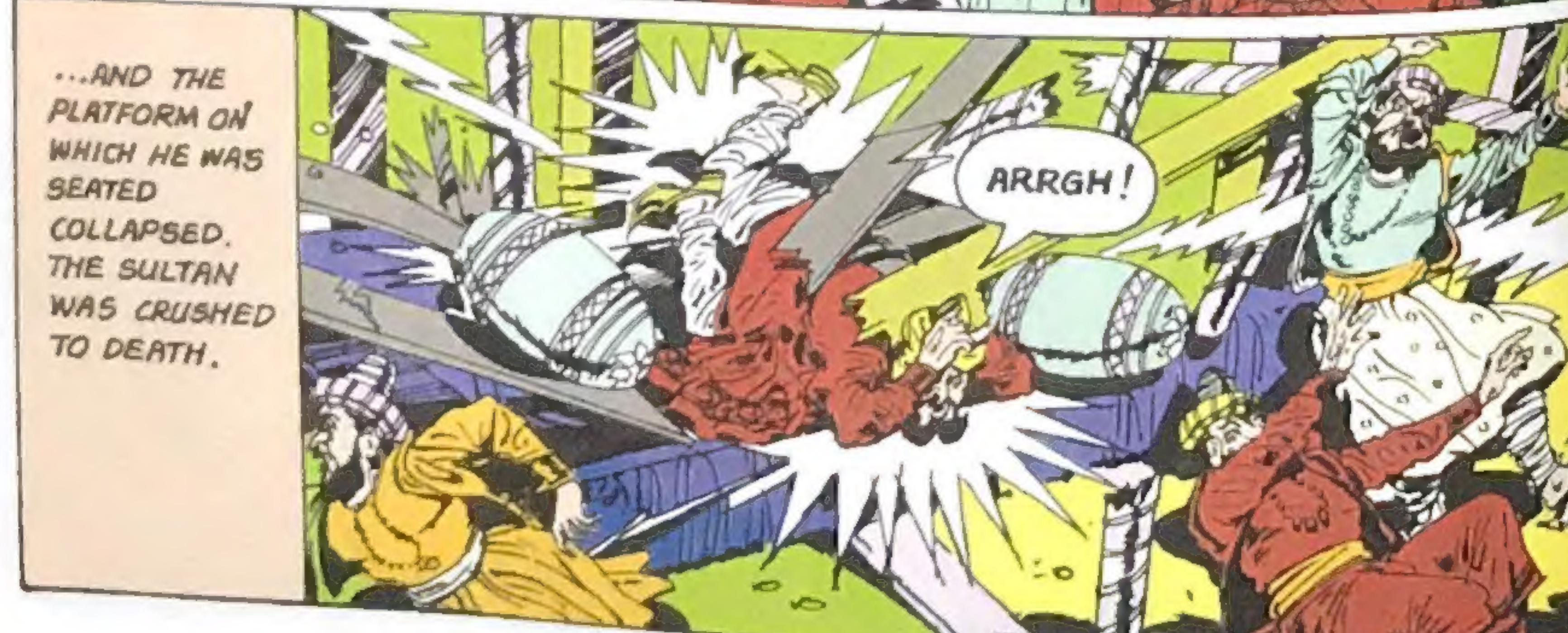
FORTUNATELY FOR THE SAINT, GHIYAS-UD-DIN WAS IN BENGAL AT THAT TIME.



WHEN GHIYAS-UD-DIN CONCLUDED HIS BUSINESS IN BENGAL AND SET OUT FOR HOME, THE SAINT'S FOLLOWERS BEGAN TO FEEL UNEASY.

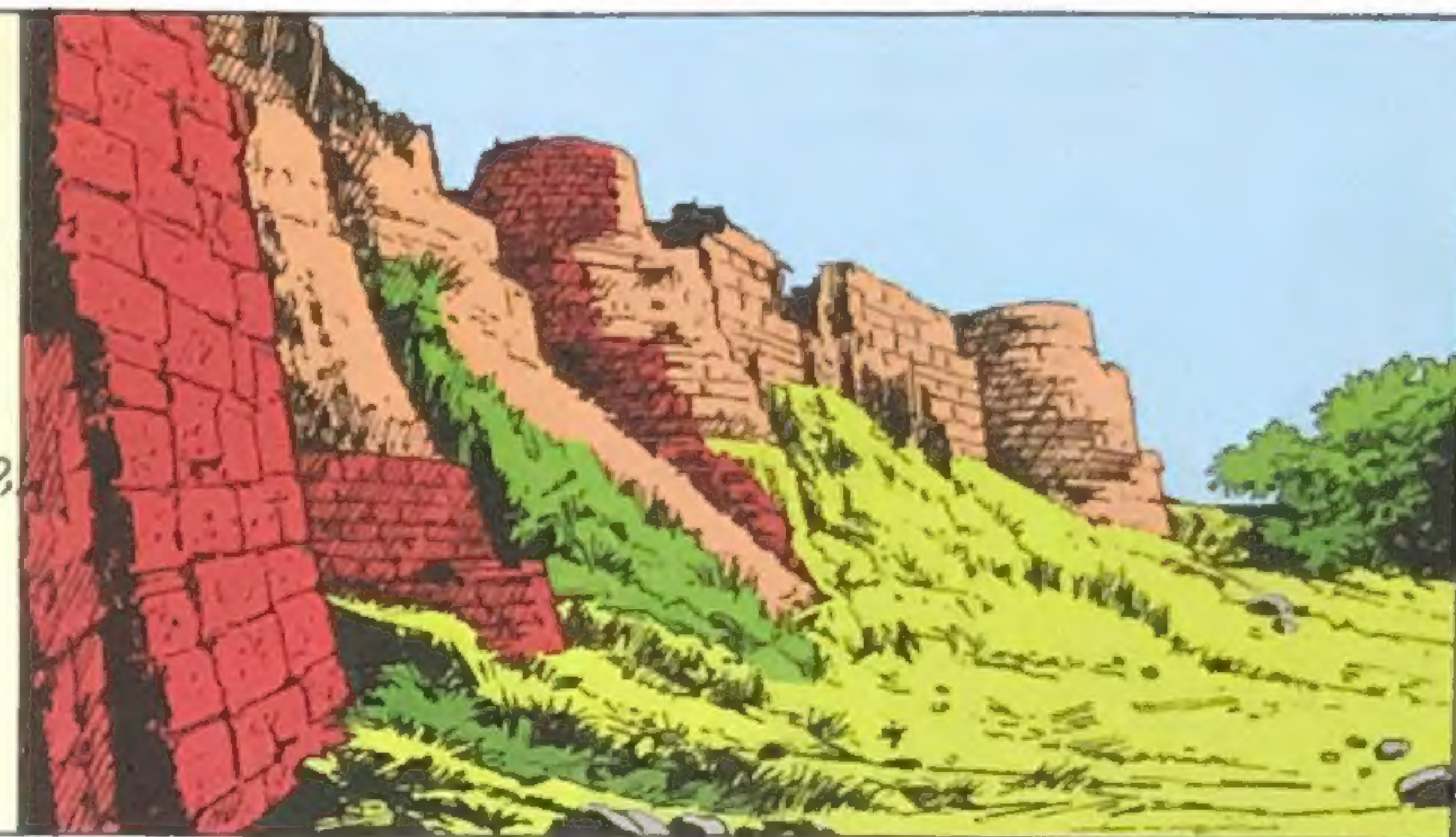


GHIYAS-UD-DIN NEVER REACHED DELHI. ON THE WAY HE ATTENDED A RECEPTION IN HIS HONOUR...

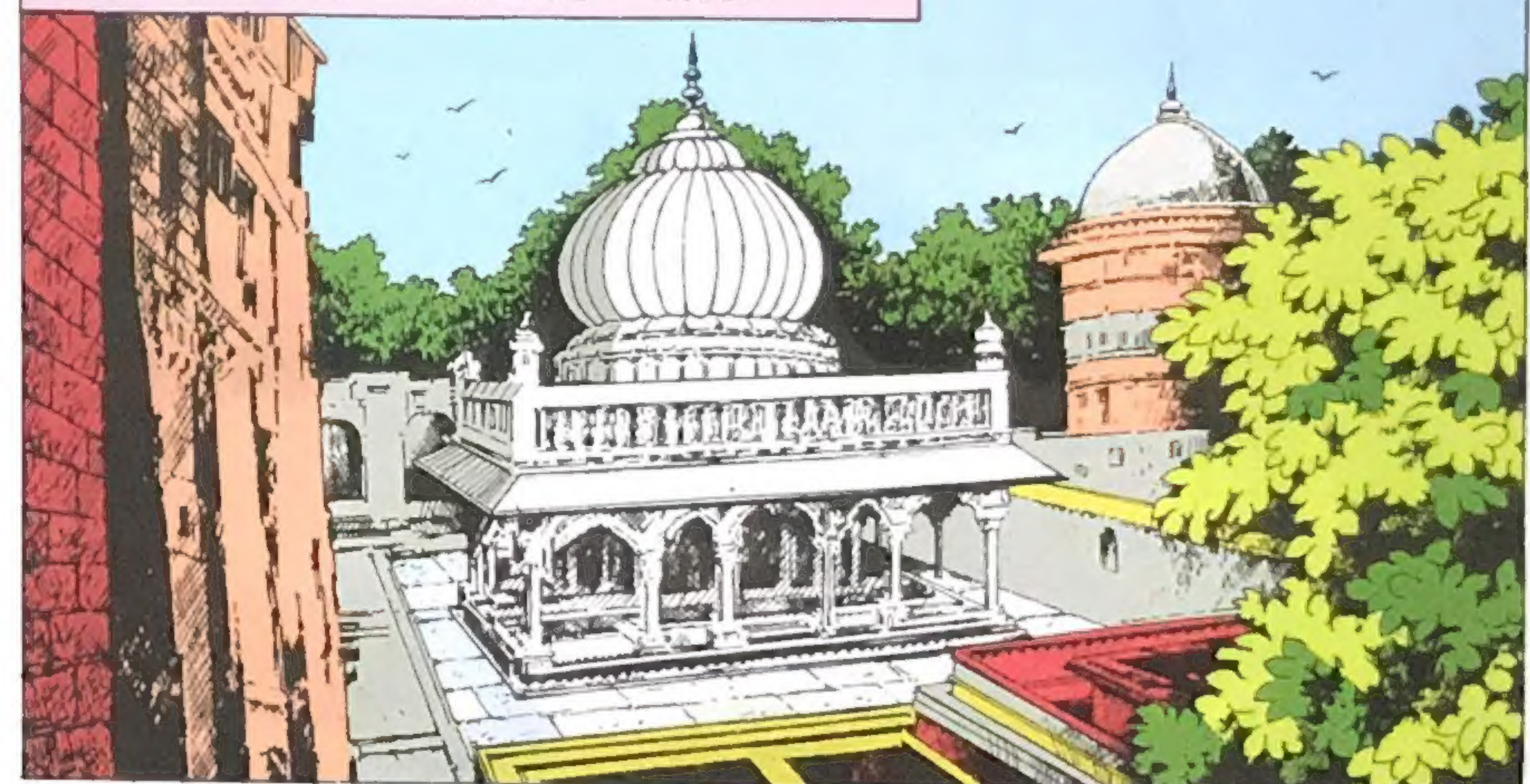


...AND THE PLATFORM ON WHICH HE WAS SEATED COLLAPSED. THE SULTAN WAS CRUSHED TO DEATH.

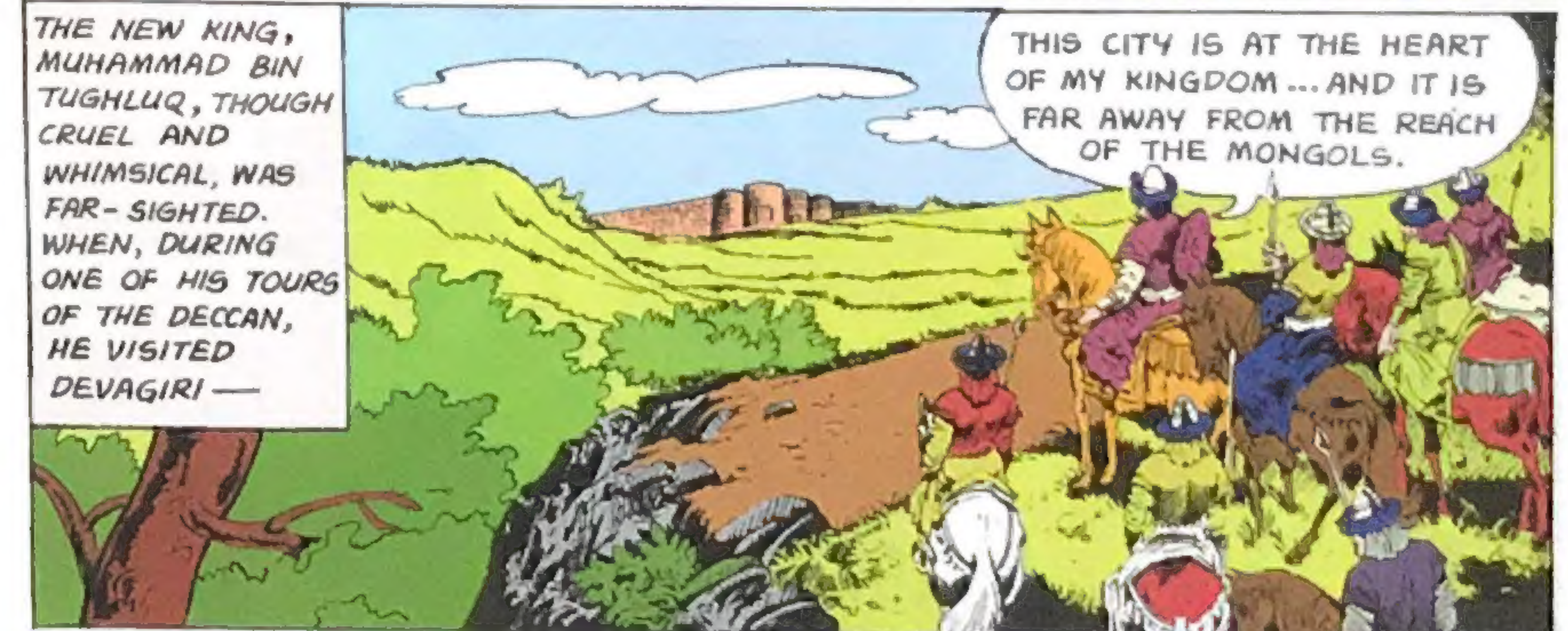
NIZAM-UD-DIN AULIYA'S PROPHECY CAME TRUE. TUGHLUQABAD, DESERTED BY GHIYAS-UD-DIN'S SUCCESSOR, MUHAMMAD, BECAME THE ABODE OF JACKALS.

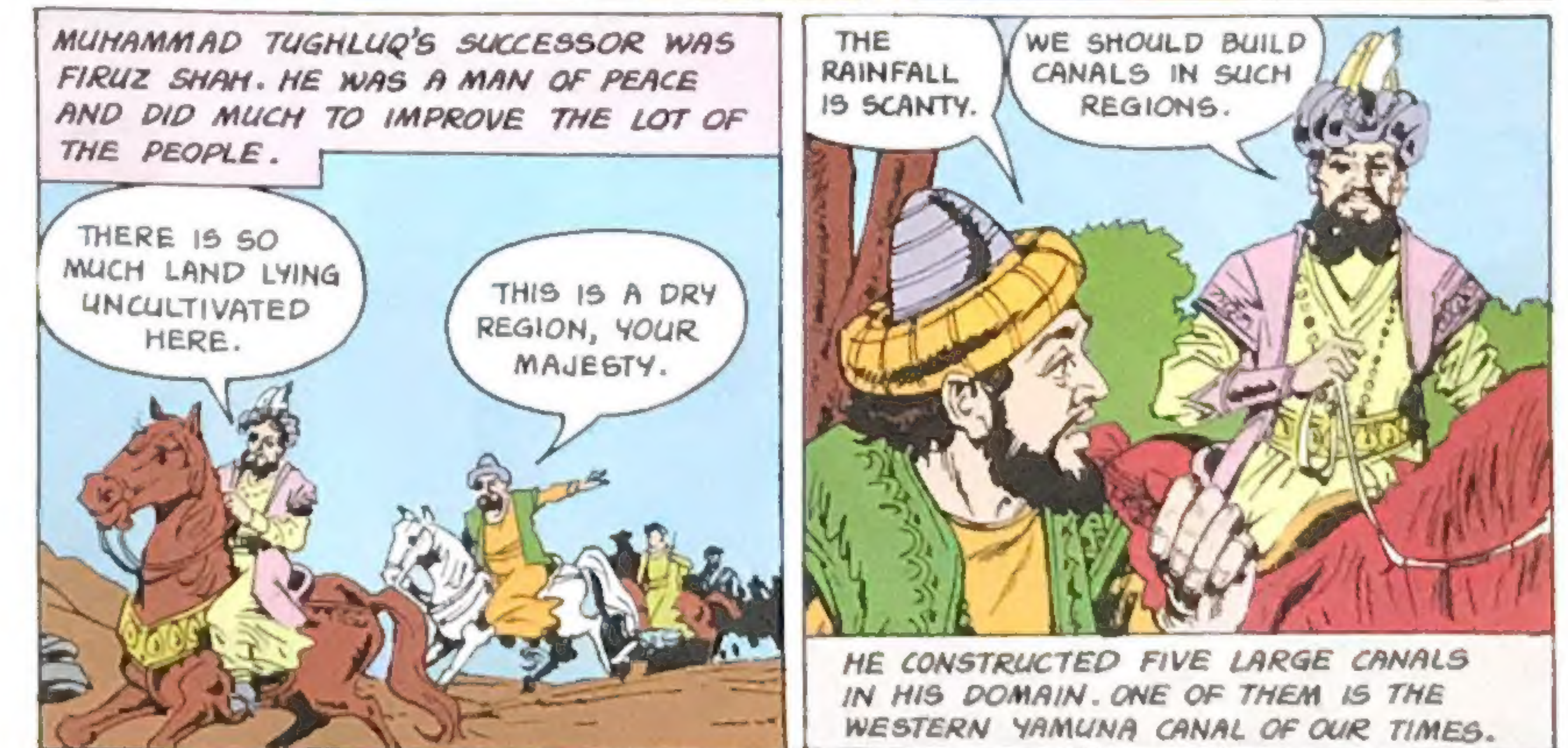


THE DARGAH OR SHRINE OF THE SAINT CAN BE SEEN 8 KM SOUTH OF PARLIAMENT HOUSE.

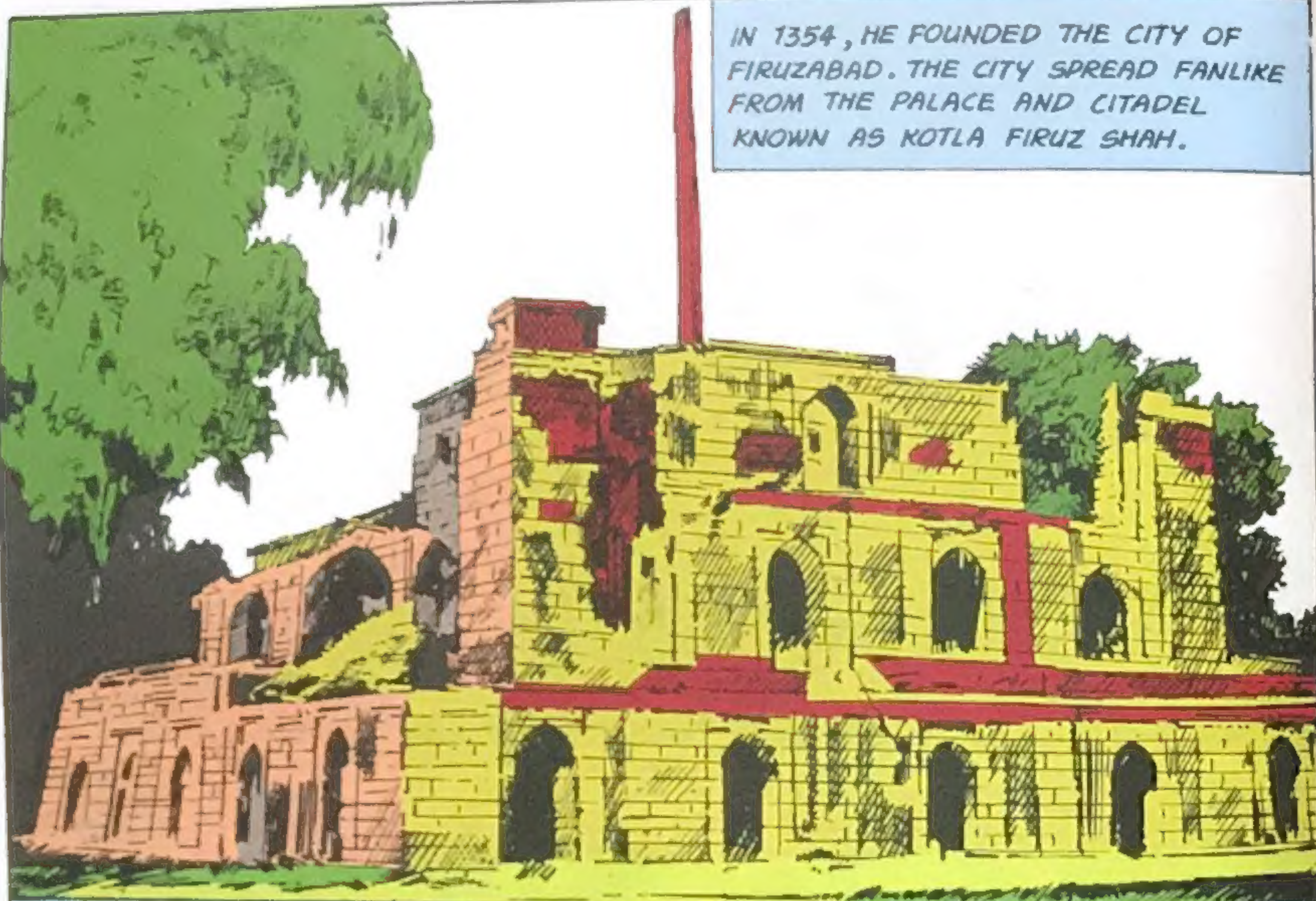


THE NEW KING, MUHAMMAD BIN TUGHLUQ, THOUGH CRUEL AND WHIMSICAL, WAS FAR-SIGHTED. WHEN, DURING ONE OF HIS TOURS OF THE DECCAN, HE VISITED DEVAGIRI —





IN 1354, HE FOUNDED THE CITY OF FIRUZABAD. THE CITY SPREAD FANLIKE FROM THE PALACE AND CITADEL KNOWN AS KOTLA FIRUZ SHAH.

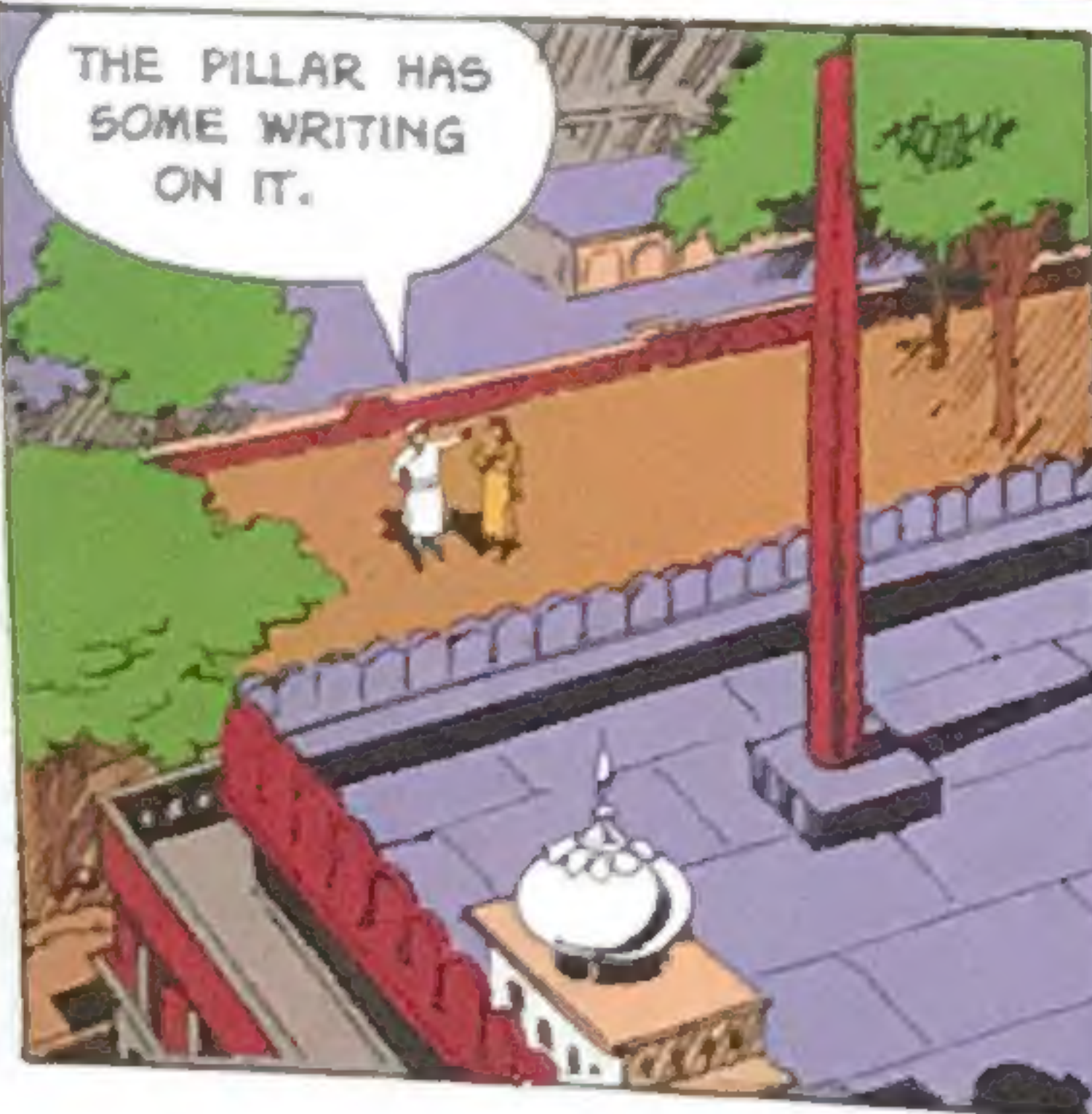


THE ASHOKA PILLAR WHICH STANDS ON A PLATFORM THERE IS MADE OF SANDSTONE AND IS 12.97 METRES IN HEIGHT.

WHEN FIRUZ SHAH FIRST BROUGHT THE PILLAR TO DELHI FROM AMBALA IT AROUSED GREAT CURIOSITY.



THE PILLAR HAS SOME WRITING ON IT.



NO ONE CAN READ IT.

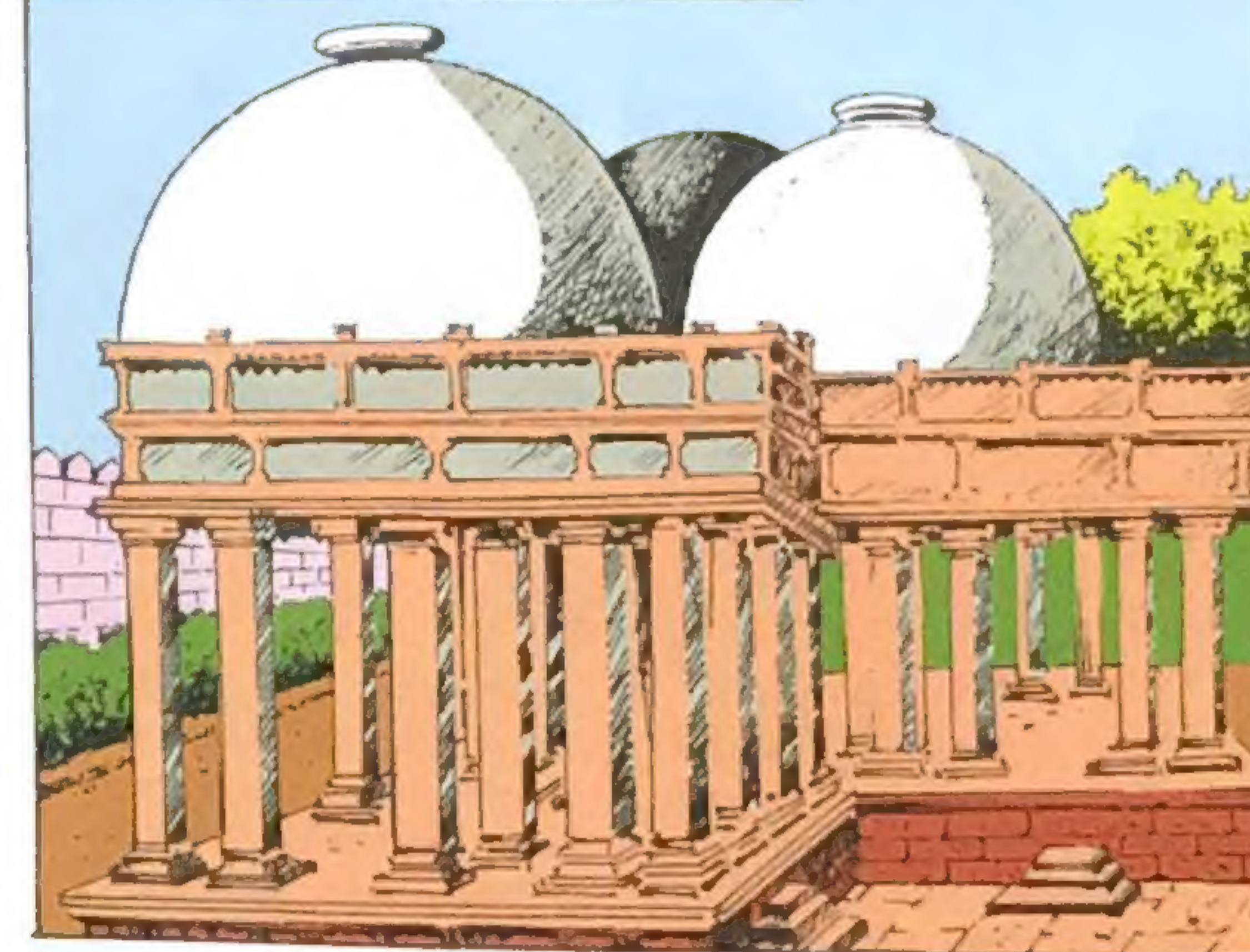


THE SULTAN HAS OFFERED A RICH REWARD TO ANYONE WHO CAN READ THE INSCRIPTION.



HOWEVER, IT WAS ONLY IN 1837 THAT THE SCRIPT WAS DECIPHERED. THE MAN WHO DID IT WAS AN ENGLISHMAN NAMED JAMES PRINCEP.

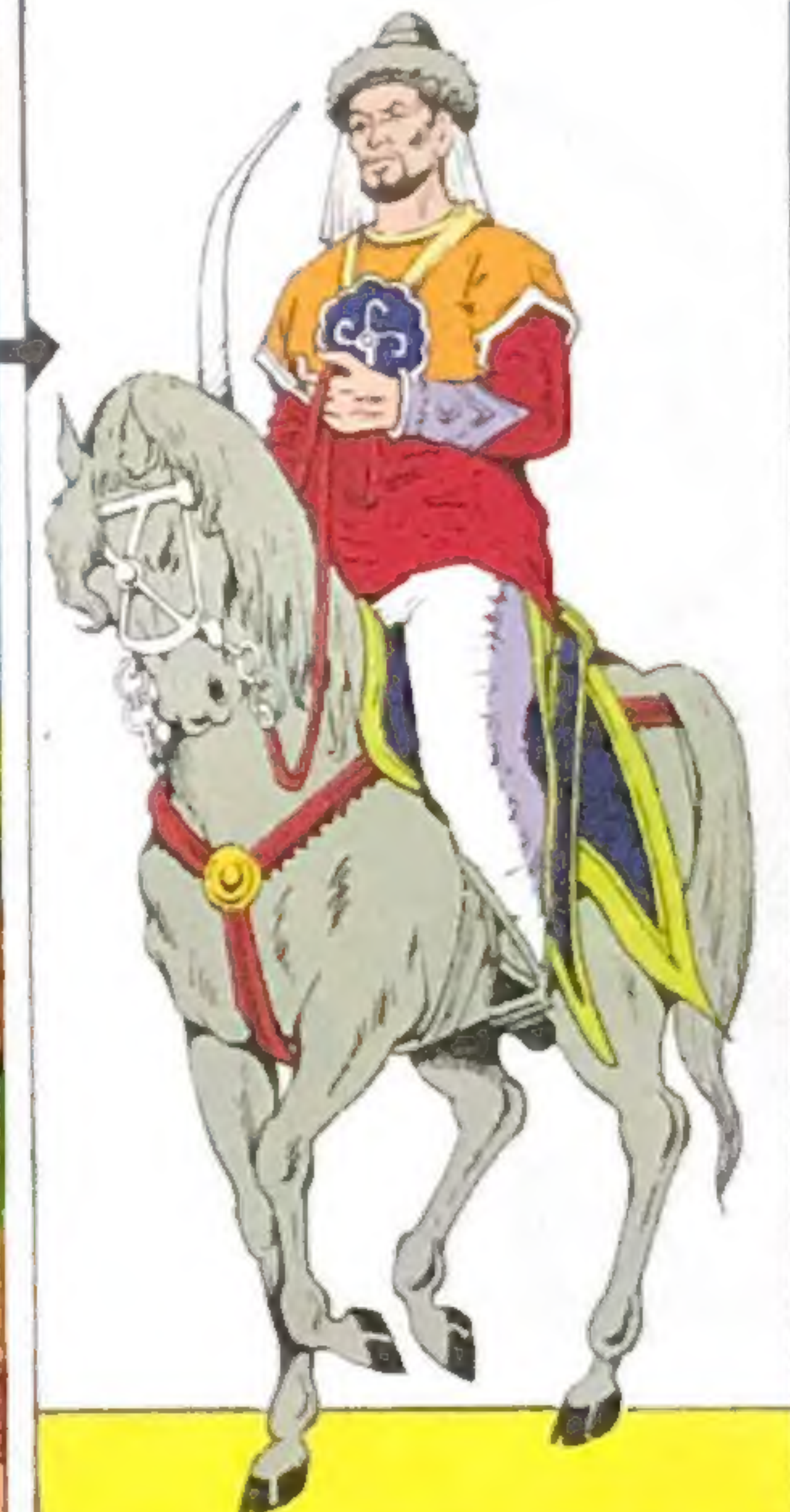
FIRUZ SHAH DIED IN 1388 AND WAS BURIED AT ONE CORNER OF HAUZ KHAS, NEAR THE QUTB MINAR.



TIMUR PLUNDERED DELHI, MASSACRED ITS INHABITANTS AND LEFT.



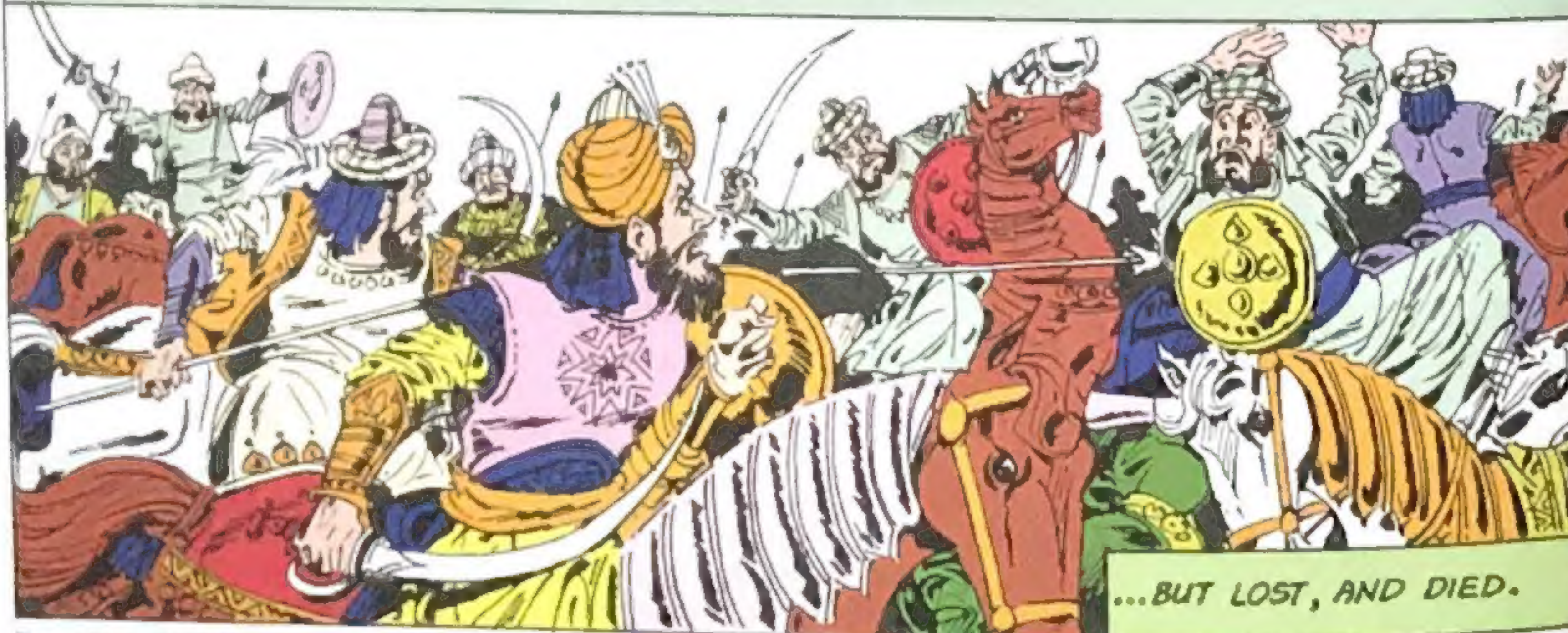
MANY OTHER KINGS FOLLOWED FIRUZ SHAH ON THE THRONE BUT THEY WERE ALL INCOMPETENT RULERS. THE TUGHLUQ DYNASTY WAS FINALLY GIVEN A DEATH-BLOW BY TIMUR THE LAME.



OVER A HUNDRED YEARS LATER ONE OF HIS DESCENDANTS, BABUR, DECIDED TO SEEK HIS FORTUNE IN INDIA.



DELHI, IN THE MEANTIME, HAD COME UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE LODIS. THE THIRD AND LAST KING OF THIS DYNASTY, IBRAHIM LODI, FOUGHT BABUR ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF PANIPAT. HE FOUGHT COURAGEOUSLY...



...BUT LOST, AND DIED.



HONOUR TO YOUR BRAVERY.

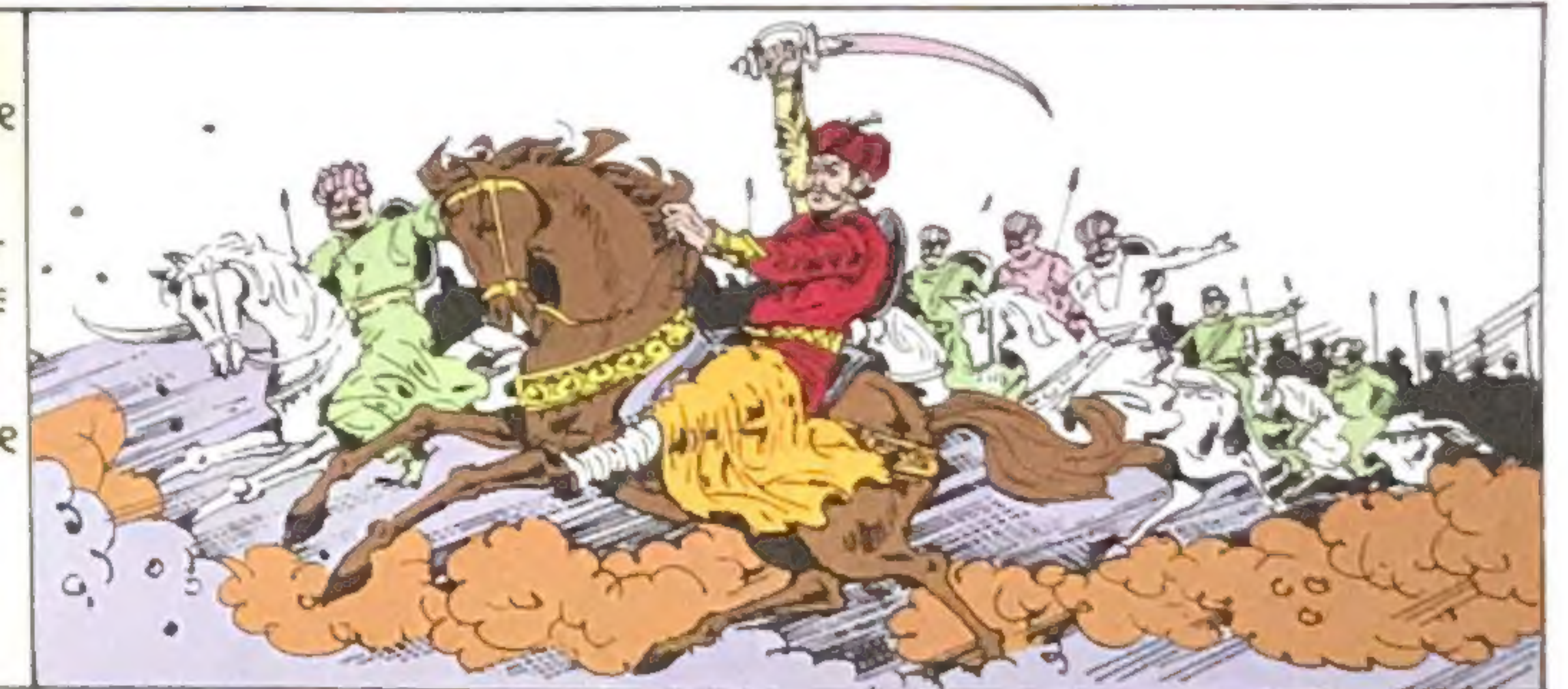
THE LODIS HAD RULED DELHI FOR 75 YEARS. THE MONUMENTS THEY HAVE LEFT BEHIND ARE SIMPLE AND AUSTERE AND EXEMPLIFIED BY THE TOMB OF THE SECOND KING, SIKANDAR LODI, SITUATED IN THE LODI GARDENS.



ZAHIR-UD-DIN MUHAMMAD BABUR ENTERED DELHI ON APRIL 24, 1526.



ONE YEAR LATER THE RAJPUTS LED BY RANA SANGA WERE AT HIS THROAT. THE RAJPUTS WERE DETERMINED TO DRIVE BABUR OUT OF DELHI... AND HINDUSTAN.



WE ARE OUTNUMBERED.

WE WERE OUTNUMBERED AT PANIPAT, TOO.



THIS IS DIFFERENT. THE RAJPUTS ARE RELENTLESS FIGHTERS. OUR ADVANCE GUARD OF 1500 MEN WAS CUT TO PIECES.

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THE HISTORIC CITY OF DELHI





NOBLEMEN AND SOLDIERS!
EVERYONE WHO COMES
INTO THE WORLD MUST
DIE!



IF WE ARE TO
DIE TODAY, LET
US DIE WITH
HONOUR!

BABUR'S WORDS LIFTED THE SAGGING SPIRITS OF HIS SOLDIERS.
THEY ATTACKED THE RAJPUTS...



...AND DEFEATED THEM IN A CLOSELY CONTESTED BATTLE. THE VICTORY
ESTABLISHED BABUR FIRMLY IN HINDUSTAN. FROM HIM SPRANG THE LONG
LINE OF MUGHAL EMPERORS UNDER WHOM DELHI REACHED THE PEAK OF HER GLORY.



BABUR WAS SUCCEEDED BY
HIS SON, THE SCHOLARLY,
BUT SUPERSTITIOUS,
HUMAYUN.

OUT! OUT!

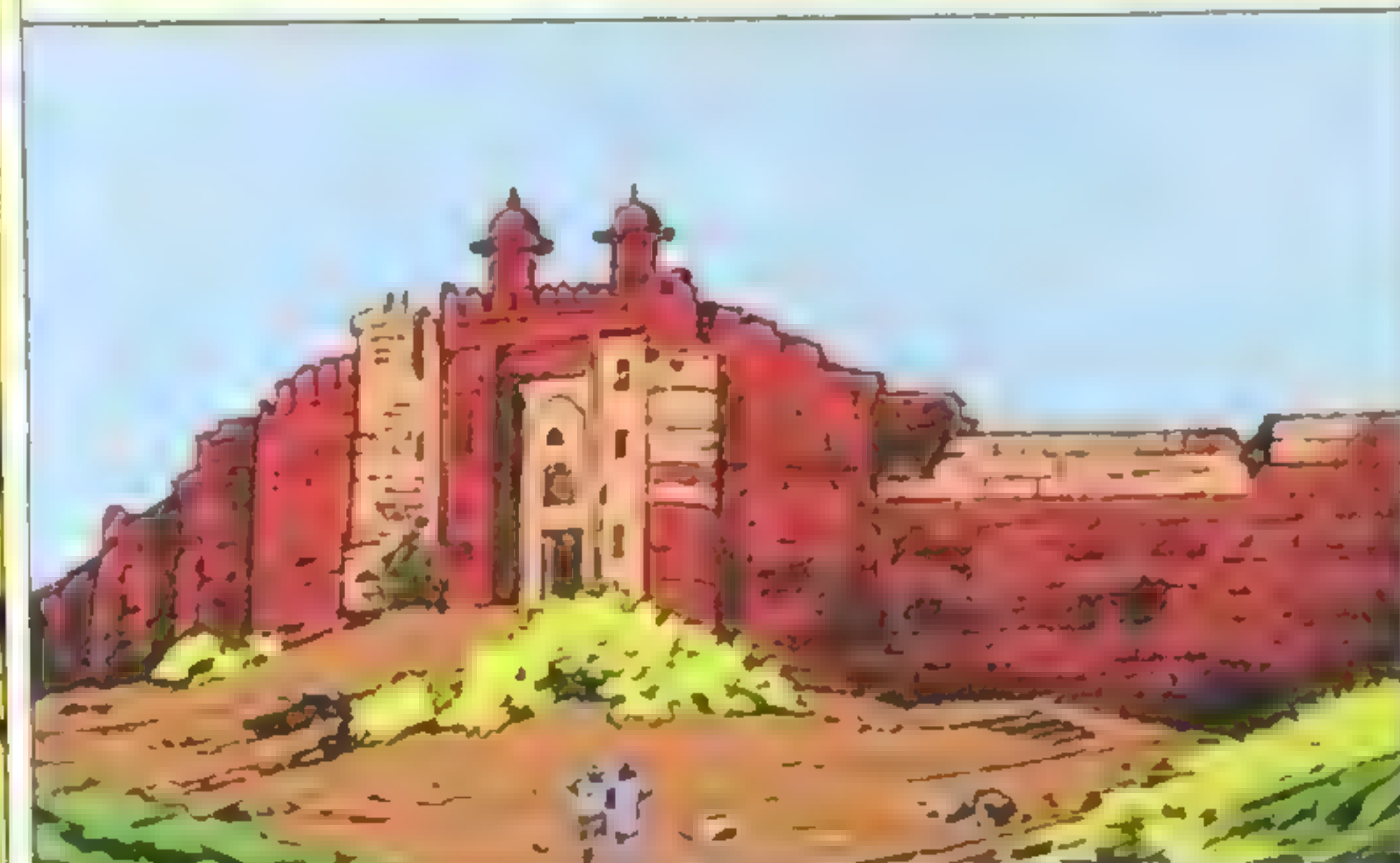


STEP OUT AND COME
IN AGAIN. BUT THIS
TIME PUT YOUR
RIGHT FOOT FORWARD
FIRST.

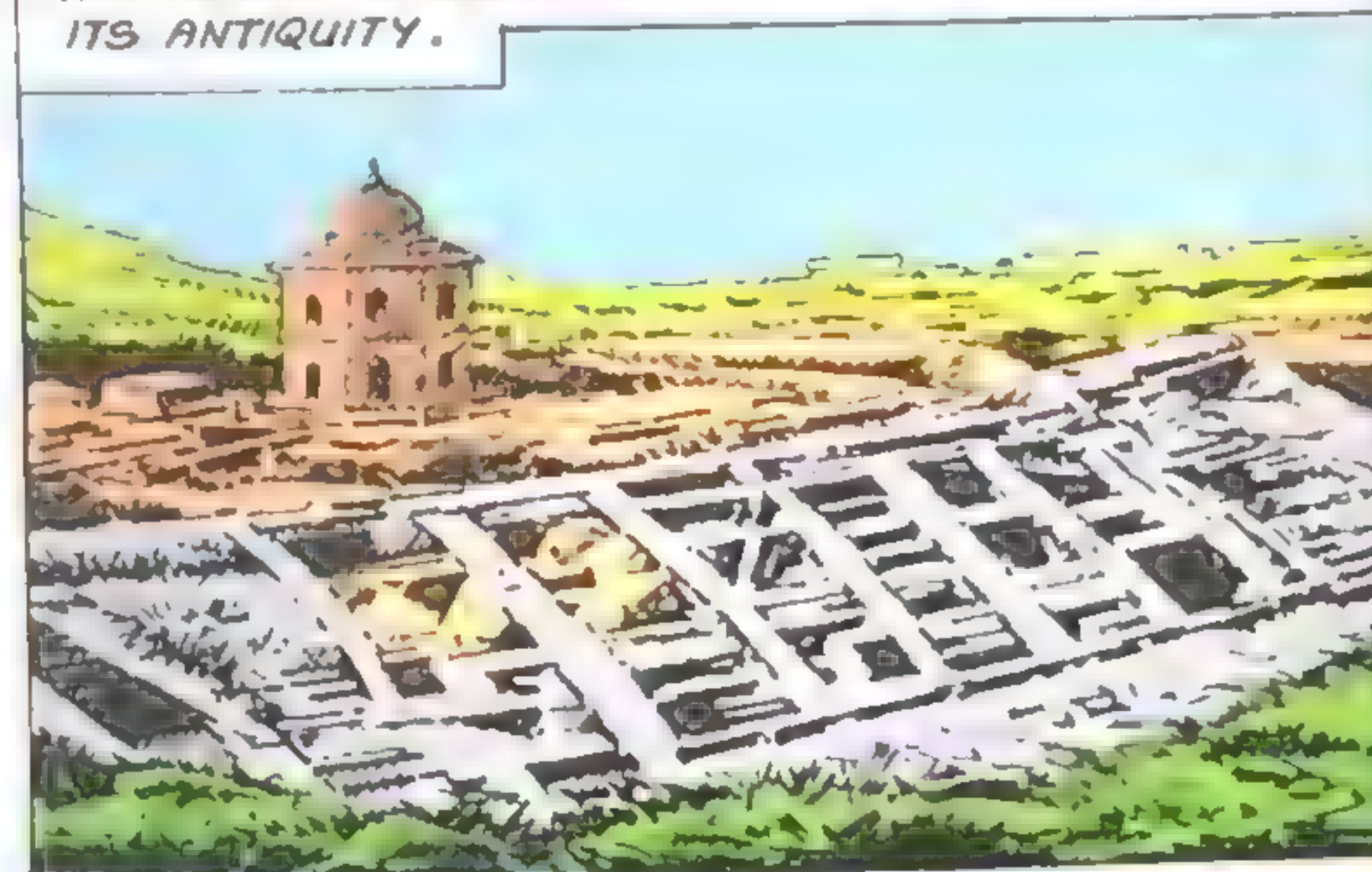


NEVER STEP INTO
A HOUSE OR A
MOSQUE WITH
YOUR LEFT
FOOT.

HUMAYUN COULD NOT DECIDE BETWEEN AGRA AND
DELHI FOR A CAPITAL. BUT HE BUILT OR RESTORED
A FORT NOW KNOWN AS PURANA QILA IN DELHI.



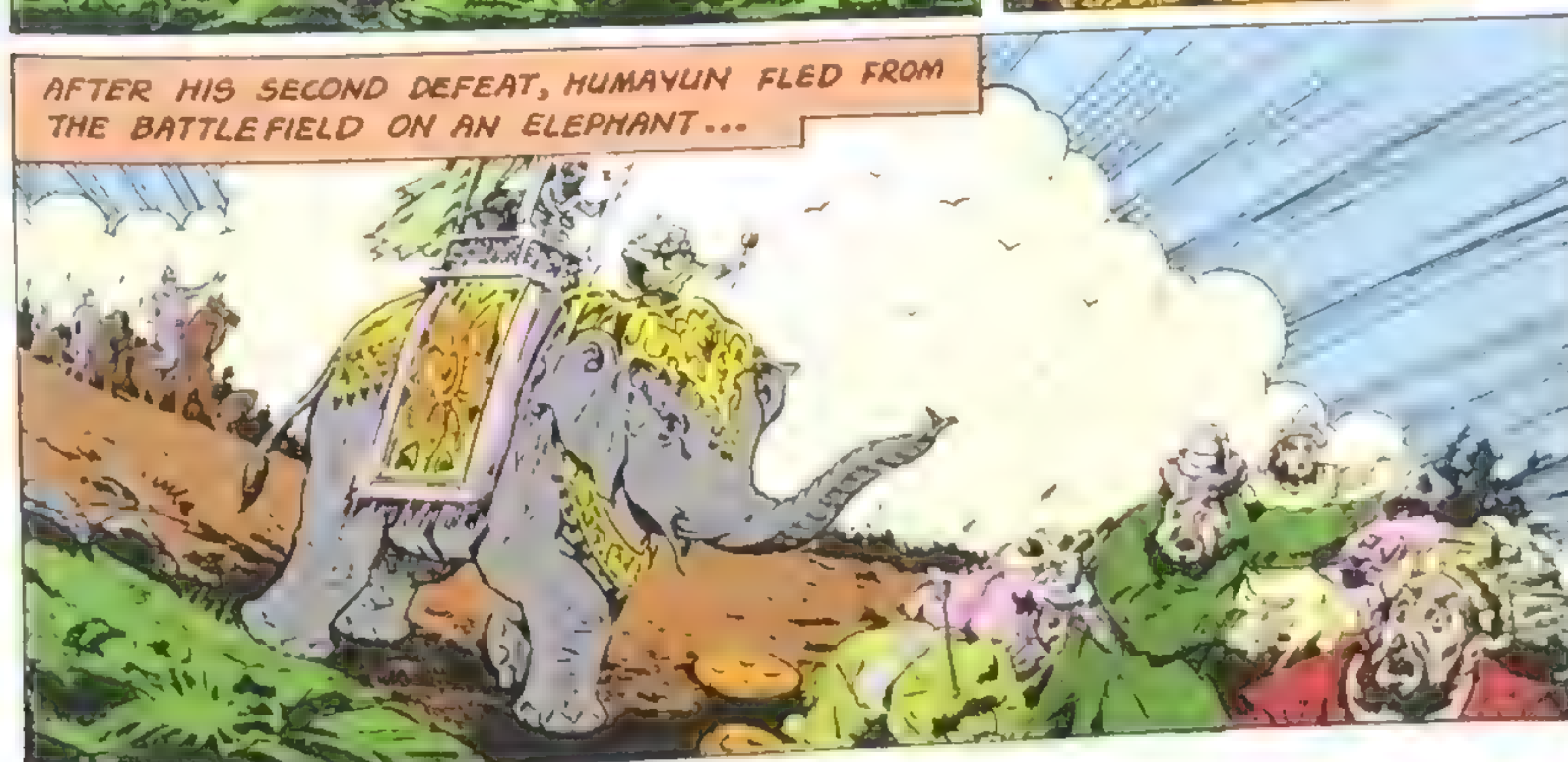
WHERE THE FORT STANDS TODAY, IS BELIEVED TO BE
THE SITE OF THE ANCIENT CITY OF INDRAPRASTHA.
THE PLACE IS BEING EXCAVATED TO DETERMINE
ITS ANTIQUITY.



HUMAYUN WAS TWICE DEFEATED
BY THE AFGHAN, SHER SHAH.



AFTER HIS SECOND DEFEAT, HUMAYUN FLED FROM
THE BATTLEFIELD ON AN ELEPHANT...



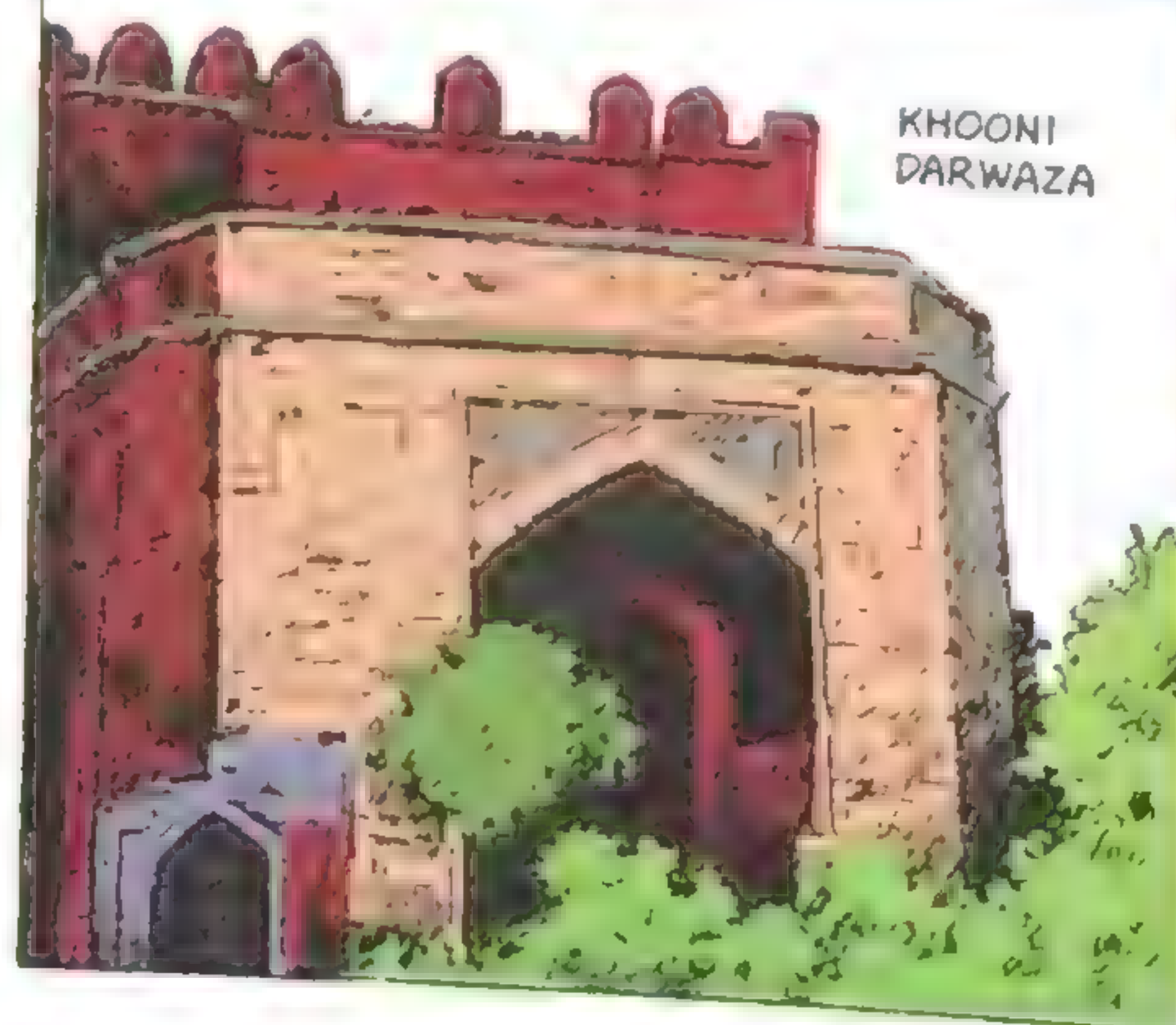
...AND THEREAFTER BECAME A HOMELESS WANDERER FOR OVER A DECADE.



SHER SHAH WAS A GOOD RULER. HE BUILT ROADS AND IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS. THE GRAND TRUNK ROAD WAS BUILT DURING HIS REIGN.



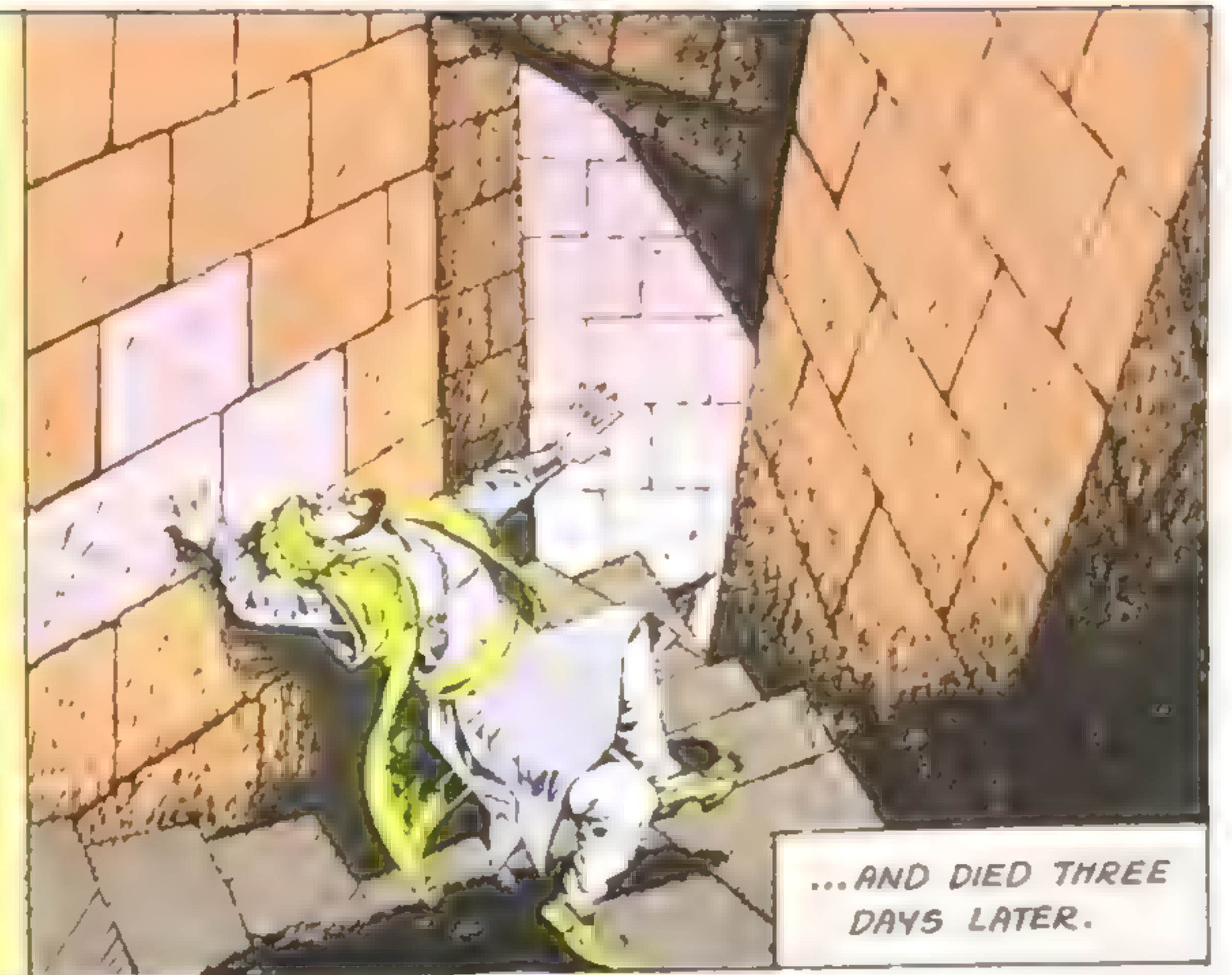
HE BUILT A NEW CITY IN DELHI, USING MATERIAL FROM THE RUINS OF FIRUZABAD. A GATEWAY OF THE CITY, NOW KNOWN AS KHOONI DARWAZA, STANDS NEAR KOTLA FIRUZ SHAH.



HE CONSTRUCTED TWO BUILDINGS WITHIN THE PRECINCTS OF THE PURANA QILA. ONE WAS A MOSQUE AND THE OTHER WAS THE SHER MANDAL.



SOME YEARS LATER WHEN HUMAYUN REGAINED THE THRONE OF DELHI, HE SLIPPED ON THE STAIRS OF THIS BUILDING, STRUCK HIS RIGHT TEMPLE ON A SHARP EDGE ...

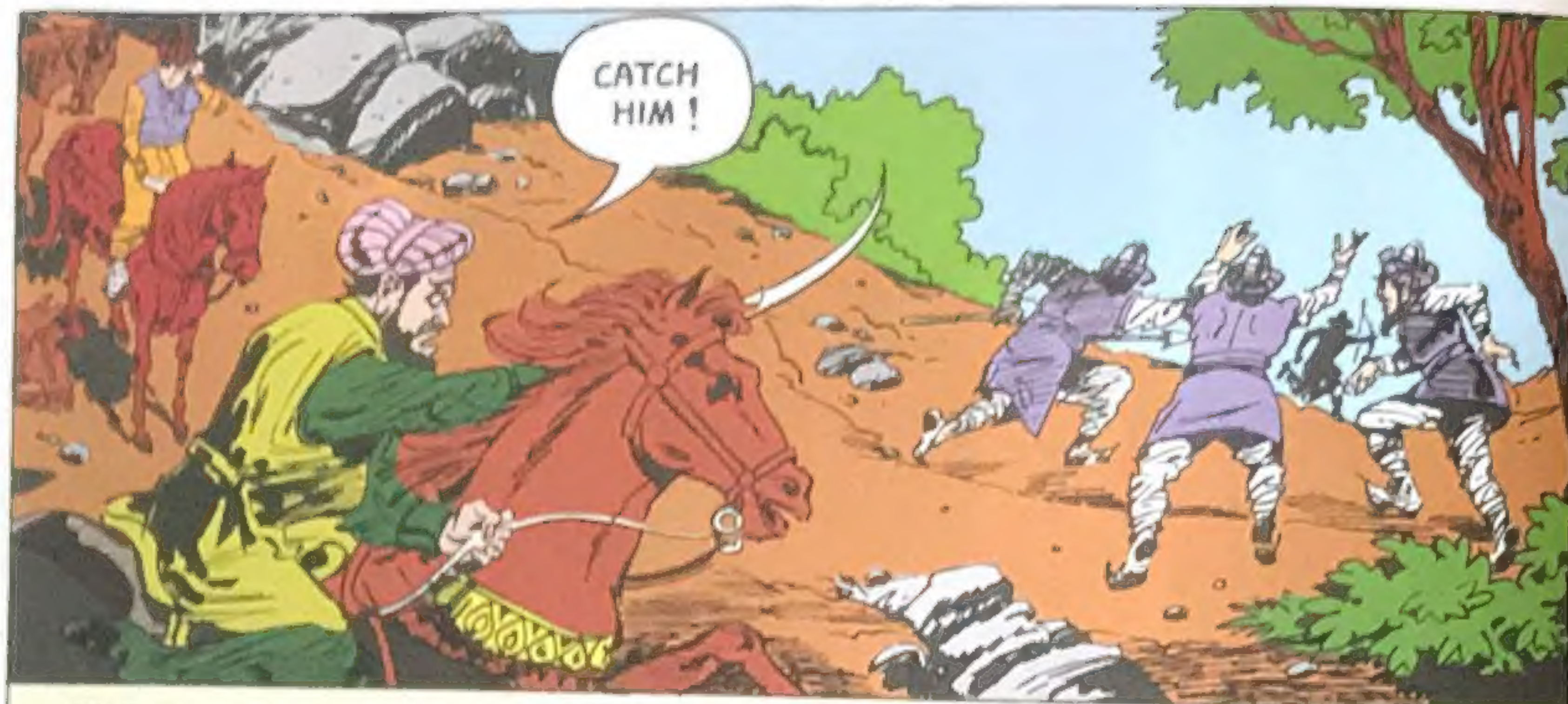


HUMAYUN'S MAUSOLEUM IS SITUATED CLOSE TO THE SHRINE OF NIZAM-UD-DIN.



HUMAYUN WAS SUCCEEDED BY HIS SON, AKBAR THE GREAT. ONE DAY WHEN AKBAR WAS RETURNING FROM A VISIT TO THE SHRINE OF NIZAM-UD-DIN AULIYA —

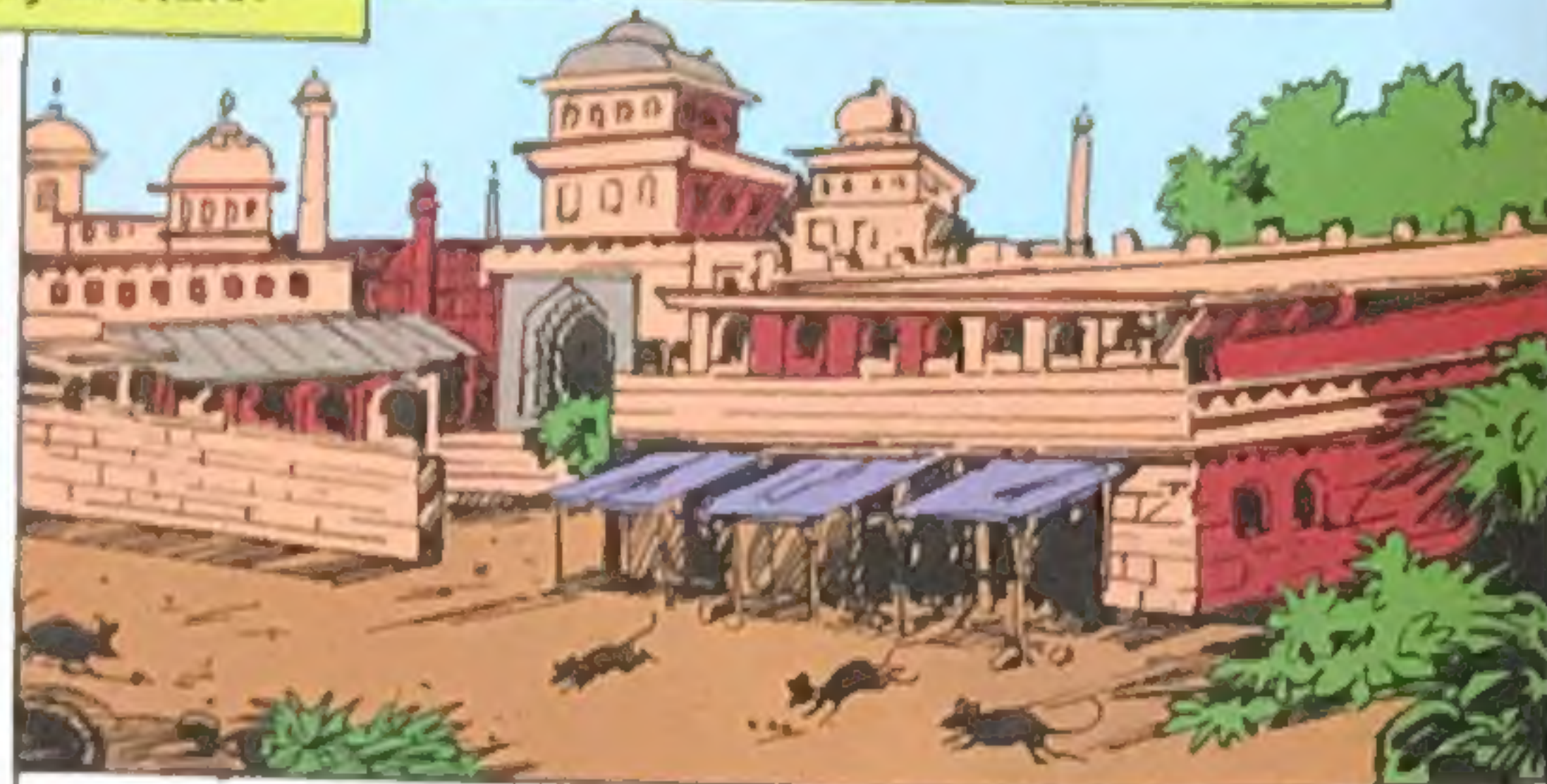




THE WOULD-BE ASSASSIN WAS CAUGHT AND PUNISHED BUT AKBAR DID NOT CARE MUCH FOR DELHI AFTER THAT. HE RULED FROM AGRA AND FATEHPUR SIKRI.



DELHI DID NOT FIND FAVOUR WITH THE NEXT EMPEROR, JAHANGIR, EITHER.



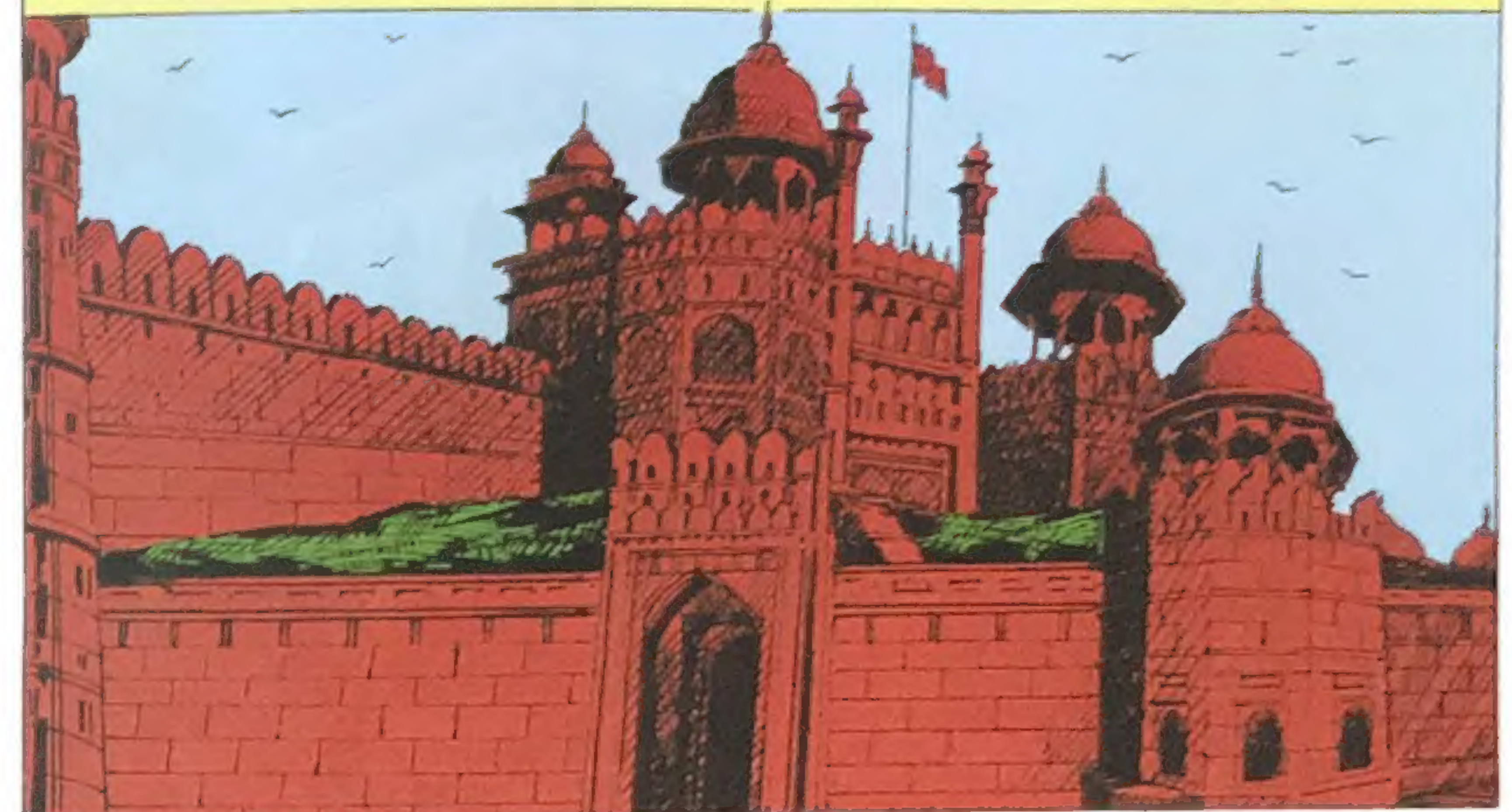
DEVASTATED BY PLAGUE, THE CITY OF KINGS BECAME THE CITY OF RATS.

JAHANGIR RULED FOR 22 YEARS. THE NEXT OCCUPANT OF THE THRONE WAS SHAH JAHAN.

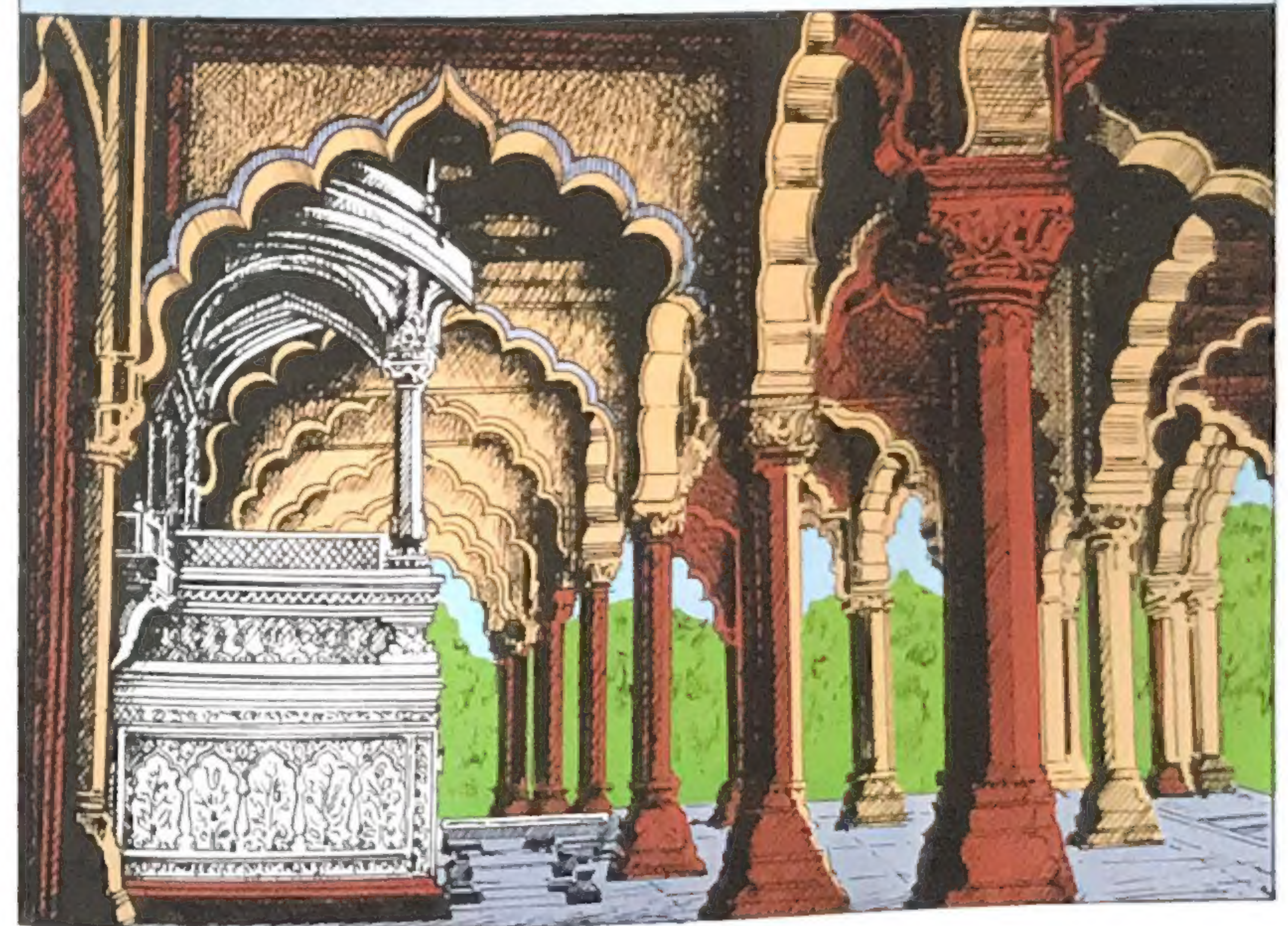


SHAH JAHAN IT IS SAID, FOUND THE STREETS OF AGRA TOO NARROW AND CONGESTED FOR HIS ROYAL PROCESSIONS...

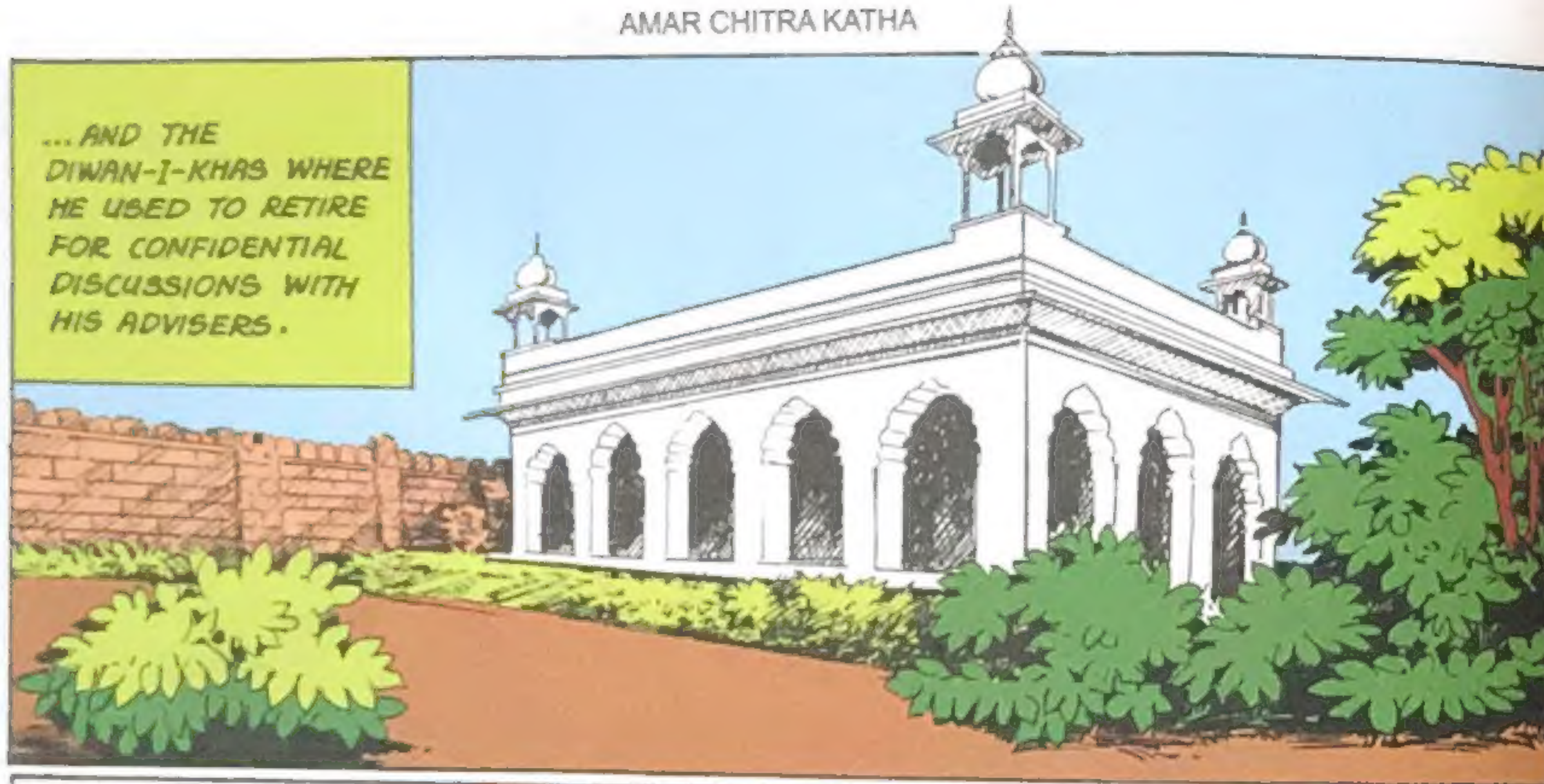
... AND DECIDED TO SHIFT TO DELHI. THERE HE BUILT A MAGNIFICENT CITADEL NOW KNOWN AS THE RED FORT. THE FORT IS SAID TO HAVE COST ABOUT ONE CRORE OF RUPEES TO BUILD.



THERE ARE SEVERAL BEAUTIFUL BUILDINGS WITHIN THE FORT, INCLUDING THE DIWAN-I-AAM WHERE THE EMPEROR USED TO GRANT AUDIENCE TO HIS SUBJECTS...



...AND THE
DIWAN-I-KHAS WHERE
HE USED TO RETIRE
FOR CONFIDENTIAL
DISCUSSIONS WITH
HIS ADVISERS.



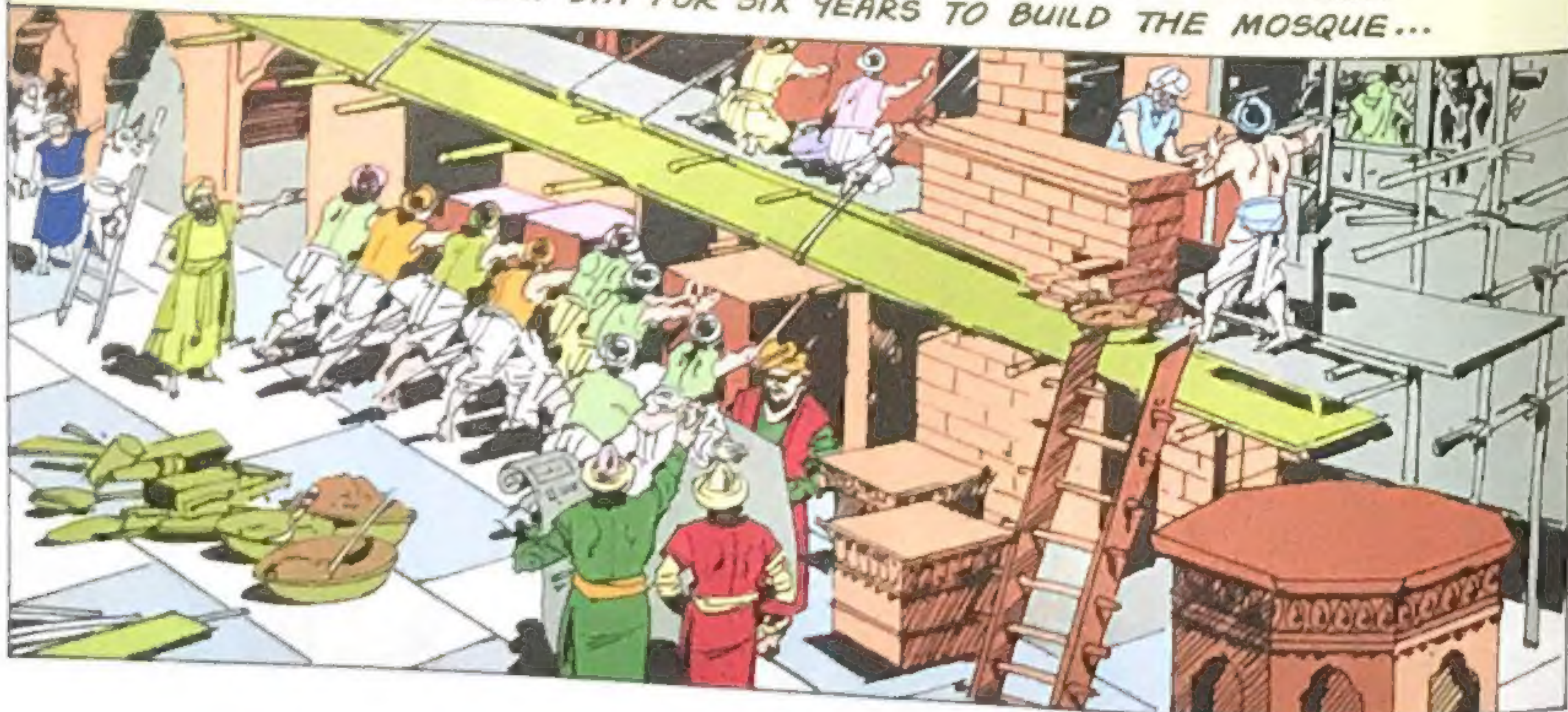
SHAH JAHAN
DECIDED TO BUILD
A MOSQUE TOO.
AT THE TIME OF
LAYING THE
FOUNDATION OF
THE MOSQUE —

I OFFER THE HONOUR OF
LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE
TO ANY OF YOU WHO HAS ON
NO SINGLE OCCASION
MISSED HIS MIDNIGHT
PRAYER.

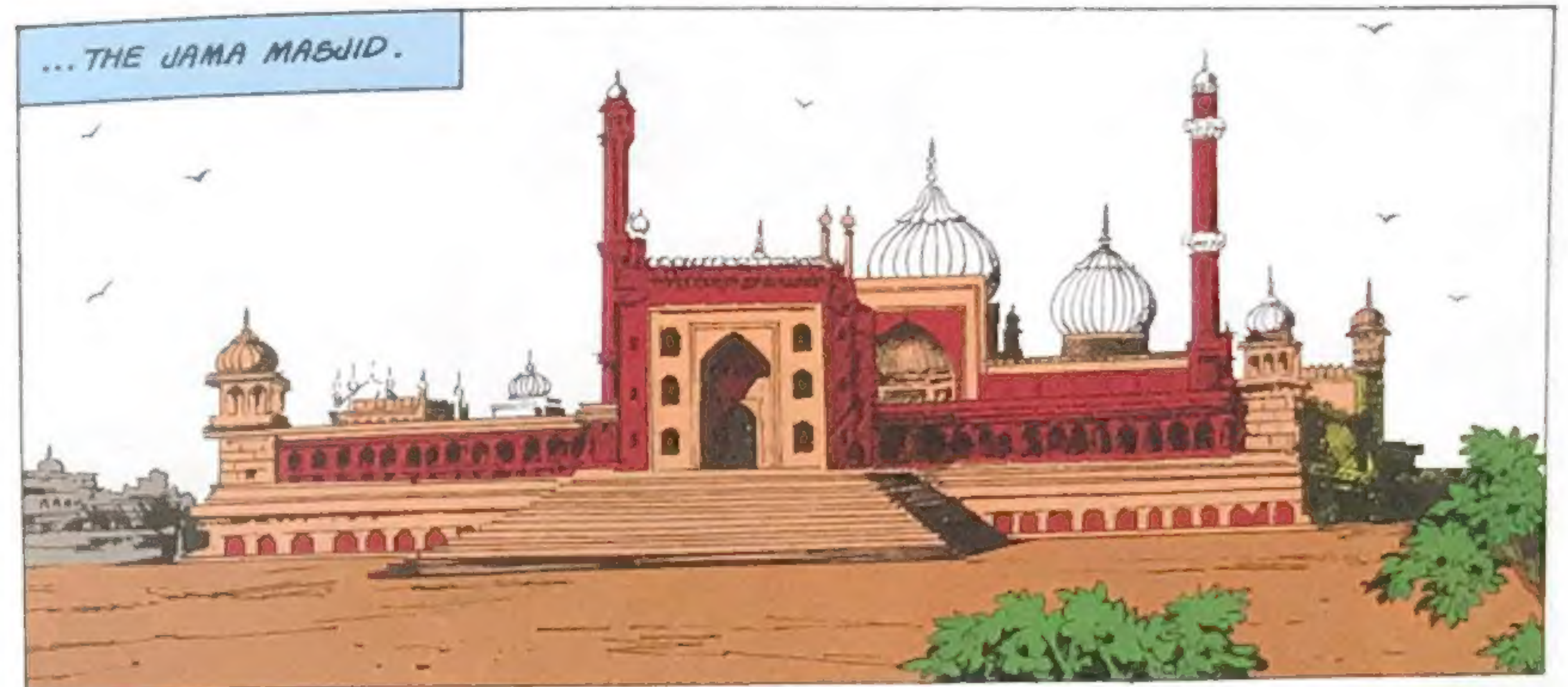


NO ONE CAME FORWARD.

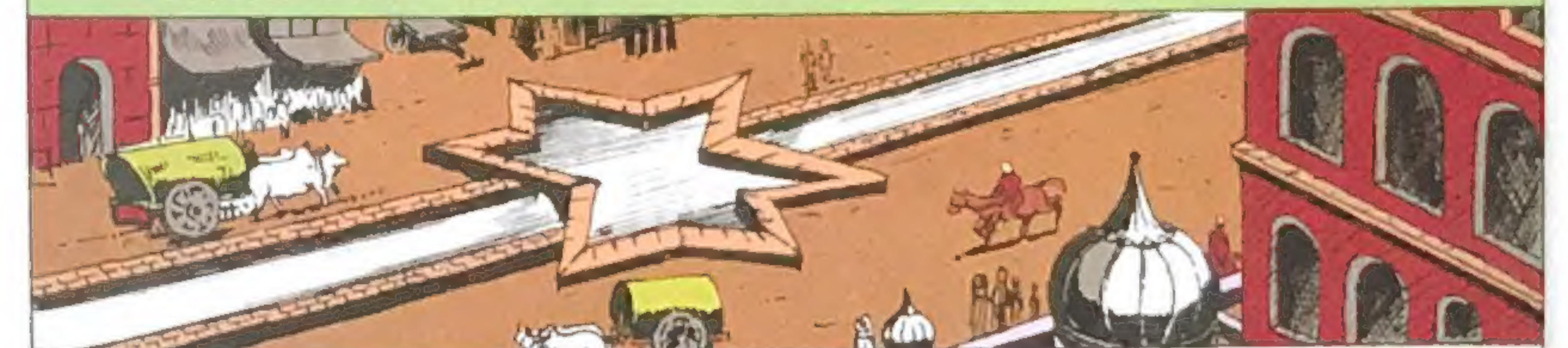
THE EMPEROR HAD TO PERFORM THE CEREMONY HIMSELF. FIVE THOUSAND
WORKMEN LABOURED EVERY DAY FOR SIX YEARS TO BUILD THE MOSQUE...



...THE JAMA MASJID.



A PROSPEROUS CITY, SHAHJAHANABAD SPRANG UP OUTSIDE THE RED FORT.
CHANDNI CHOWK WAS THE MAIN THOROUGHFARE OF THIS CITY.



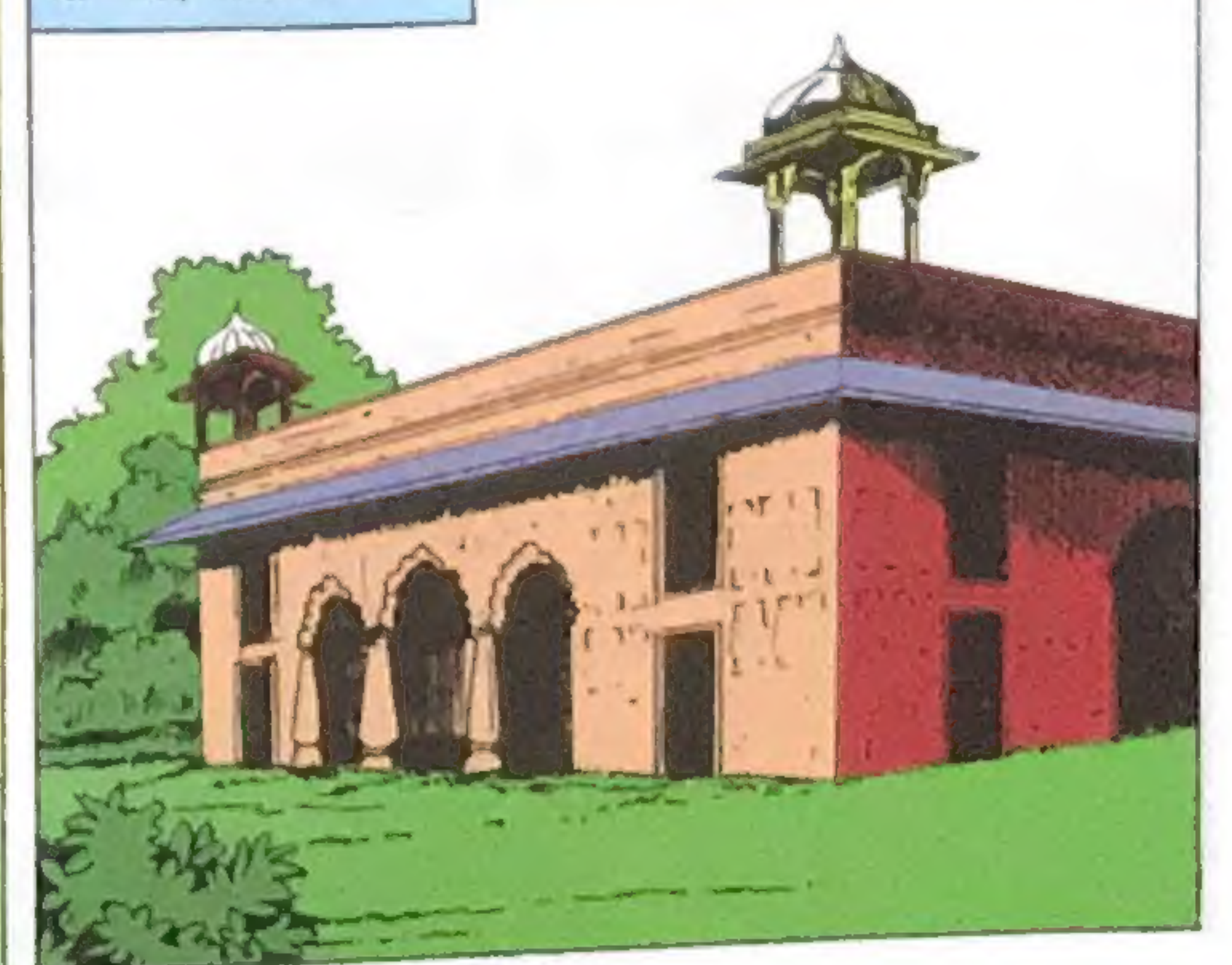
MUGHAL POWER REACHED ITS ZENITH DURING THE REIGN OF SHAH JAHAN
AND DELHI BECAME ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CITIES OF THE WORLD.

SHAH JAHAN WAS DEPOSED BY
HIS YOUNGEST SON, AURANGZEB.



AURANGZEB MURDERED TWO OF
HIS BROTHERS, DROVE ONE AWAY
AND ASCENDED THE THRONE.

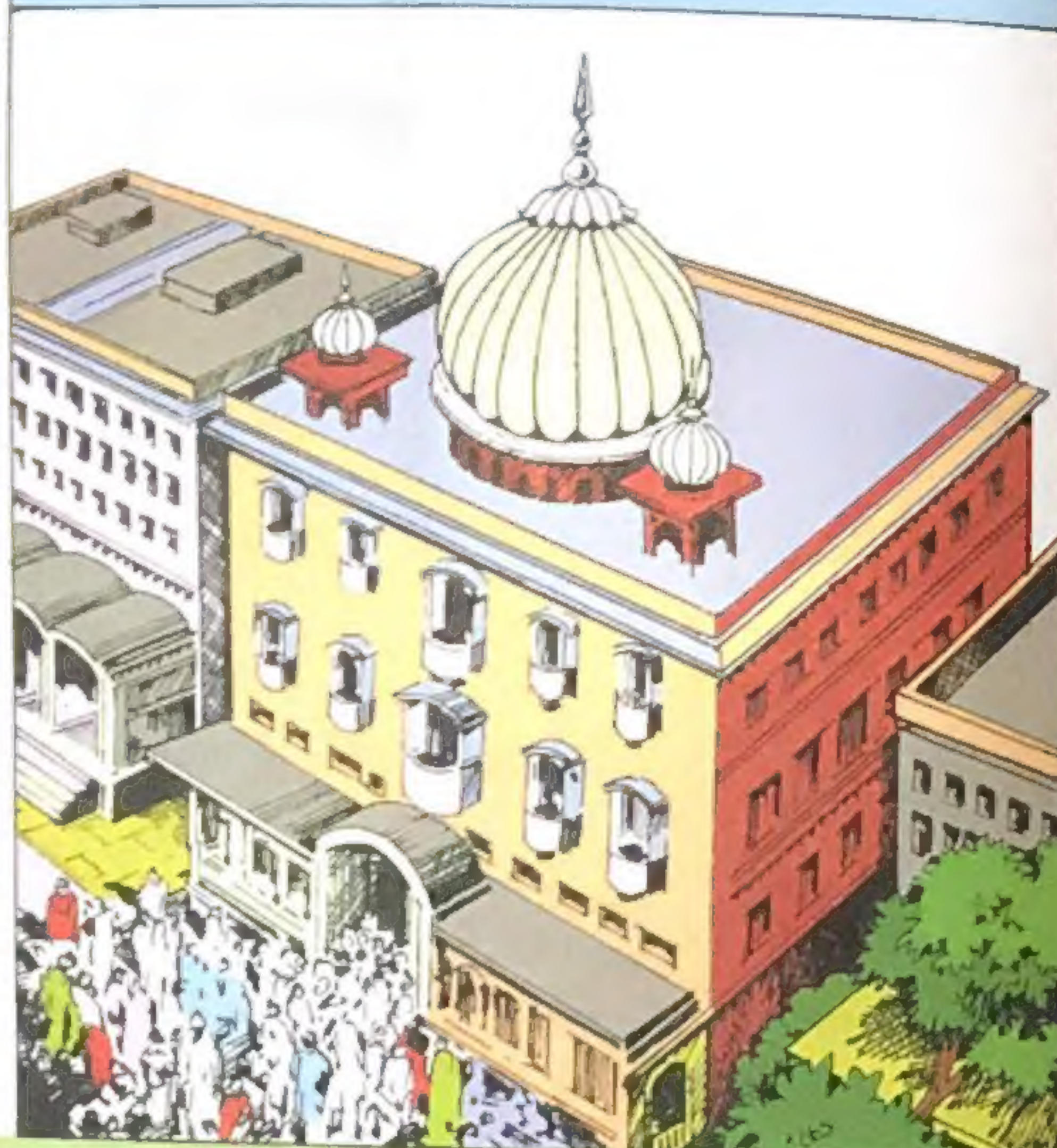
HE WAS HELPED BY HIS SISTER, ROSHANARA.
TODAY, IF ROSHANARA IS REMEMBERED
AT ALL, IT IS FOR THE BEAUTIFUL GARDENS
SHE LAID OUT AND WHICH ARE NAMED
AFTER HER.



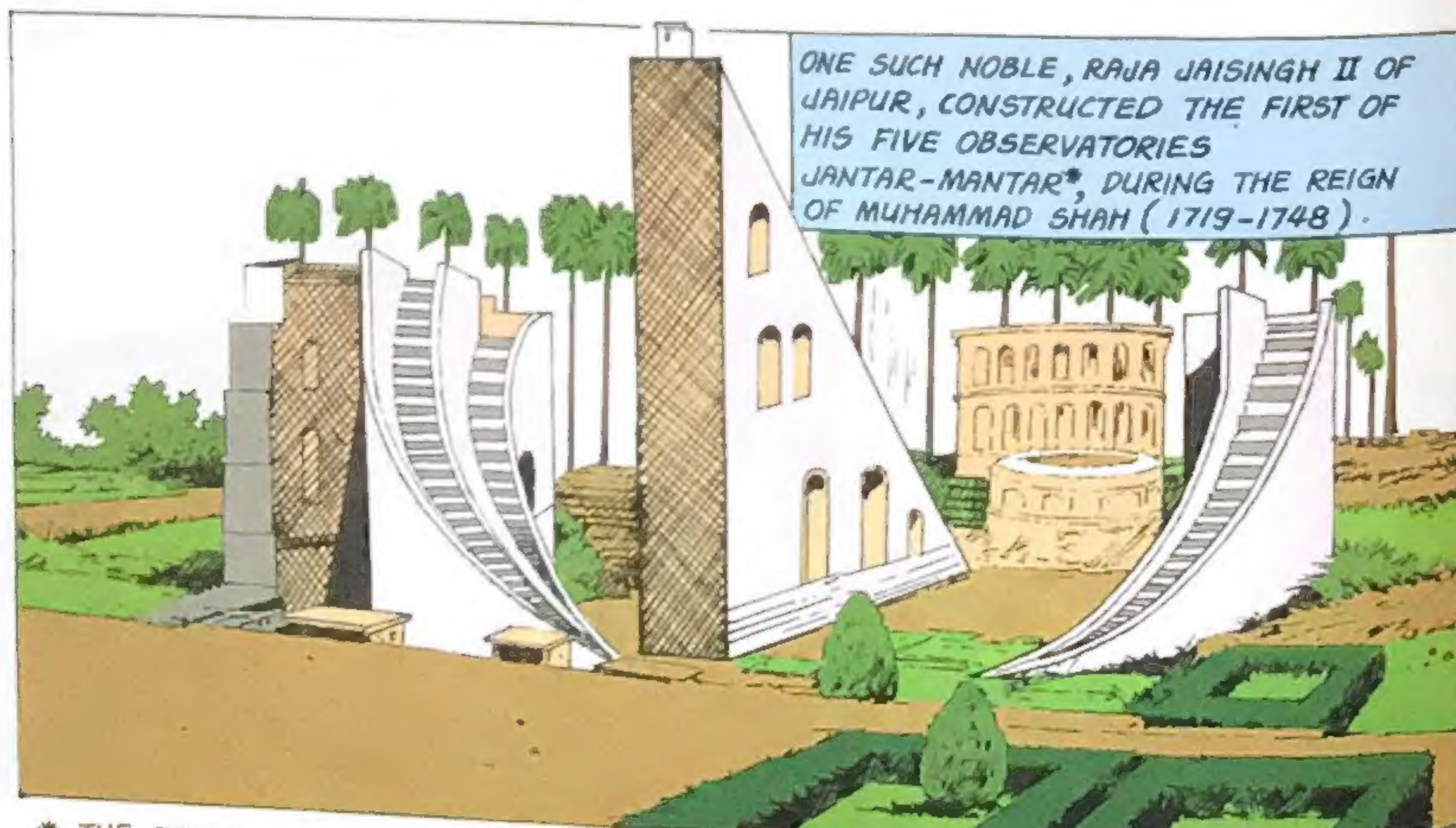
AURANGZEB WAS ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF GURU TEGH BAHADUR.



THE TRUNK OF THE BANYAN TREE UNDER WHICH THE GURU IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN BEHEADED CAN STILL BE SEEN IN THE GURUDWARA SIS GANU IN CHANDNI CHOWK.



THE SIGNS OF THE DECLINE OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE WERE EVIDENT DURING THE LATER YEARS OF THE REIGN OF AURANGZEB. AMBITIOUS NOBLES BEGAN TO ACQUIRE MORE AND MORE POWER AND INFLUENCE.



ONE SUCH NOBLE, RAJA JAISINGH II OF JAIPUR, CONSTRUCTED THE FIRST OF HIS FIVE OBSERVATORIES JANTAR-MANTAR*, DURING THE REIGN OF MUHAMMAD SHAH (1719-1748).

* THE OTHERS ARE IN UJJAIN, JAIPUR AND VARANASI. THE ONE HE BUILT IN MATHURA IS NO LONGER EXTANT.

WITH MORE AND MORE PROVINCES SLIPPING OUT OF ITS CONTROL THE MUGHAL EMPIRE BEGAN TO CRUMBLE. THEN IN 1739 —



NADIR SHAH OF PERSIA PLUNDERED DELHI AND MASSACRED ITS INHABITANTS.



WHEN HE LEFT, HE TOOK WITH HIM THE FABULOUS KOH-I-NOOR, THE PEACOCK THRONE AND SO MUCH WEALTH THAT HE SENT WORD HOME TO PERSIA THAT HIS SUBJECTS WOULD NOT HAVE TO PAY TAXES FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS.

IN THE NEXT HUNDRED YEARS DELHI WAS REPEATEDLY RAVAGED BY THE PATHANS, THE ROHILLAS AND THE MARATHAS.

AND THE ONCE GREAT MUGHAL EMPIRE DIMINISHED SO RAPIDLY THAT THE LAST OF THE DYNASTY OF BABUR, BAHADUR SHAH ZAFAR, HAD AUTHORITY ONLY WITHIN THE FOUR WALLS OF THE RED FORT.



BAHADUR SHAH ZAFAR WAS A POET AND A GENTLE SOUL. BUT IN 1857 HE UNWITTINGLY BECAME THE RALLYING POINT FOR REVOLUTIONARY FORCES IN THE COUNTRY AND HE WAS ARRESTED BY THE BRITISH.



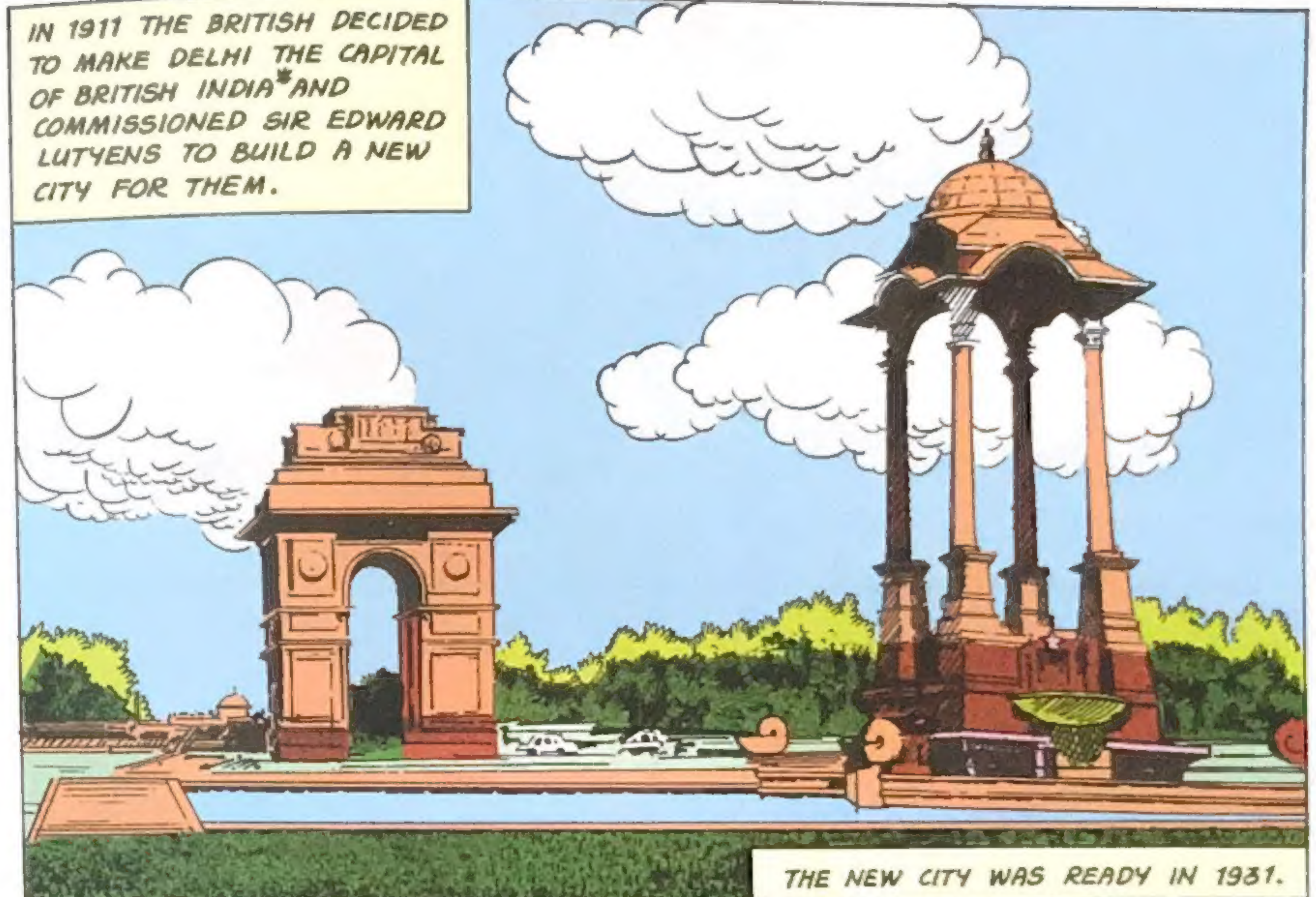
THREE OF HIS SONS WERE SHOT DOWN IN COLD BLOOD NEAR THE GATEWAY, EVER SINCE KNOWN AS KHOONI DARWAZA *...



...AND THEIR BODIES WERE EXHIBITED ON A PLATFORM IN THE BAZAAR OF CHANDNI CHOWK.

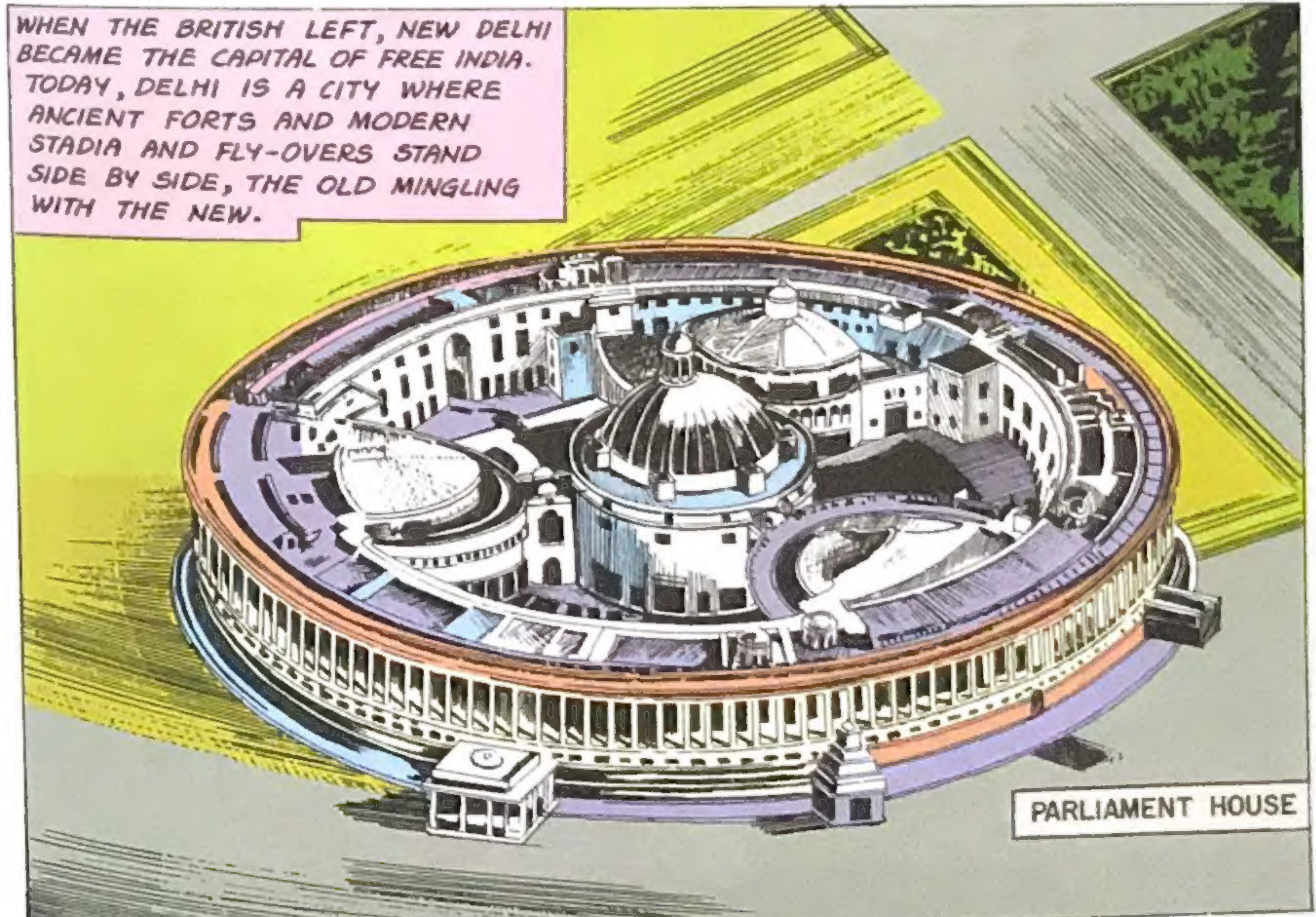
* SEE PAGE 19

IN 1911 THE BRITISH DECIDED TO MAKE DELHI THE CAPITAL OF BRITISH INDIA* AND COMMISSIONED SIR EDWARD LUTYENS TO BUILD A NEW CITY FOR THEM.



THE NEW CITY WAS READY IN 1931.

WHEN THE BRITISH LEFT, NEW DELHI BECAME THE CAPITAL OF FREE INDIA. TODAY, DELHI IS A CITY WHERE ANCIENT FORTS AND MODERN STADIA AND FLY-OVERS STAND SIDE BY SIDE, THE OLD MINGLING WITH THE NEW.



PARLIAMENT HOUSE

* CALCUTTA HAD BEEN THE CAPITAL TILL THEN 31